

THE PIONEER HISTORIES

EDITED BY V. T. HARLOW, M.A., AND J. A. WILLIAMSON, D.LIT.

THE PORTUGUESE PIONEERS

THE PIONEER HISTORIES

Edited by V. T. Harlow, M.A., & J. A. Williamson, D.Lit.

First Titles

THE EUROPEAN NATIONS IN THE WEST INDIES

ARTHUR PERCIVAL NEWTON, D.LIT.

Rhodes Professor of Imperial History, University of London

ENGLAND'S QUEST OF EASTERN TRADE

SIR WILLIAM FOSTER, C.I.E.

Formerly Historiographer to the India Office

THE PORTUGUESE PIONEERS

EDGAR PRESTAGE, D.LITT.

*Camões Professor of Portuguese Language and History
in the University of London*

THE EXPLORERS OF NORTH AMERICA

J. BARTLET BREBNER, M.A., PH.D.

Assistant Professor, Department of History, Columbia University

In Preparation

THE GREAT TREK

ERIC A. WALKER, M.A.

Professor of History, University of Cape Town

THE EXPLORATION OF THE PACIFIC

J. C. BEAGLEHOLE, PH.D.

THE SPANISH CONQUISTADORES

F. A. KIRKPATRICK, M.A.

Reader in Spanish in the University of Cambridge

THE PORTUGUESE PIONEERS

BY

EDGAR PRESTAGE

M.A., D.LITT., F.R.H.S., F.R.G.S.

CAMOENS PROFESSOR OF PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE, LITERATURE
AND HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

A. & C. BLACK LTD

4, 5 & 6 SOHO SQUARE LONDON W.1

1933

The United States

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY, NEW YORK

Australia and New Zealand

THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, MELBOURNE

Canada

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF CANADA, TORONTO

South Africa

THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAPE TOWN

India and Burma

MACMILLAN AND COMPANY LIMITED

BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

BY R. & R. CLARK LTD, EDINBURGH

EDITORS' PREFACE TO THE SERIES

THE Pioneer Histories are intended to provide broad surveys of the great migrations of European peoples—for purposes of trade, conquest and settlement—into the non-European continents. They aim at describing a racial expansion which has created the complex world of to-day, so nationalistic in its instincts, so internationalised in its relationships.

International affairs now claim the attention of every intelligent citizen, and problems of world-wide extent affect the security and livelihood of us all. He who would grasp their meaning and form sound judgements must look into the past for the foundations of the present, and, abandoning a local for a universal perspective, must take for his study the history of a world invaded by European ideas. It was less so in the days before the Great War. Then the emphasis was upon Europe itself: upon such questions as that of France's eastern frontier inherited from Richelieu and Louis XIV, the militarism of Germany derived from Frederick the Great, and the Balkan entanglement which originated with the medieval migrations of Slavonic peoples and with the Turkish conquests of the fourteenth century. Now the prospect is wider, for these ancient domestic difficulties in modern form cannot properly be estimated except by correlation with the problems of a Europeanised outer world.

EDITORS' PREFACE TO THE SERIES

The Orient is in ferment and Asiatic difficulties compel the attention of Geneva because long ago the Portuguese, followed by the Dutch and the English, rounded the Cape and came to India. For the same reason, Africa is no longer an unknown continent but a vast area in which civilised enterprise demands direction and control. Knowledge of the process by which North America was discovered and gradually filled with Europeans is the necessary basis for an understanding of the modern reactions upon each other of the new continent and the old. In South America the same process is to be seen at work, though incomplete while Nature is yet unsubdued. Similarly, it may be appreciated how the search for an unknown but credited continent lying about the South Pole has helped to shift the centre of gravity to the Pacific, and has created a white Australasia. The present series will show how the permanent factors in these great regions first presented themselves to European minds and how achievements were then effected which have governed all subsequent relationships.

But if the subject has this interest for students of affairs, it has also its appeal to those who dwell most on individual character, courage and ingenuity. Movements are made by men, and in these stories of European expansion are to be met men worth knowing, whose deeds carry inspiration for this generation as for all others.

Each volume takes for its subject the history of an important movement and, while related to others in the series, is thus complete in itself. The authors whose co-operation we have been fortunate to secure have all had experience of research in the original evidence pertaining to their subjects, and in their contributions

EDITORS' PREFACE TO THE SERIES

to this series they give the results of that research in narratives which should appeal to the general reader. Each book is designed to embody the most recent information available, and some will be found to deal with subjects of which no full treatment has hitherto been accessible in English.

V. T. HARLOW

J. A. WILLIAMSON

INTRODUCTION

THE geographical position of Portugal invited her to become a maritime power, but with a population of only one and a quarter million it could hardly have been expected that she would, in the words of R. H. Major, discover half the world in the course of a century. This wonderful achievement of a small and poor nation, though recognised by historians, is less widely known owing to lack of a monograph than it deserves to be, and even the Portuguese themselves have produced no adequate and comprehensive work on the subject since that of João de Barros in the sixteenth century, continued by Diogo do Couto. Most satisfactory instalments are, however, contained in the *Historia de Portugal*, edited by Professor D. Peres, now in course of publication, and in the three folio volumes of the recently issued *Historia da Colonisação do Brasil*. The first modern scholarly account of Portuguese Exploration by sea in any language was that of Major in 1868, which has long been out of print, and since then we have had the publications of Professor Sir Raymund Beazley on Prince Henry and studies of individual voyages by E. G. Ravenstein, Dr. J. Mees, H. Harrisse, Dr. Franz Hümmerich, and Dr. H. P. Biggar. Much new material has also been collected and printed in Portugal in the last sixty-five years, and important inedited texts have been published, such as *Esmeraldo de situ orbis*, the earliest sailing-guide

to the west and south coasts of Africa; but comparatively little of this material has been made available for English readers. The information contained in these works often supplements the narratives of the Portuguese official historians and it has been used in the present book, the scope of which is suggested by its title.

All the recorded voyages of discovery down to the end of the fifteenth century are described, but from then until the middle of the sixteenth, when the narrative ends, only the more important. Space would not allow minor coastal ventures to be included, nor indeed is their number and extent fully known; hundreds of Rutters exist in MS. in public and private libraries, in Portugal and elsewhere, for the most part unread.

This book, though much shorter than the first edition of Major, contains matter then and much later unknown, especially in Chapter XIV. Thanks especially to the researches of Snr. Joaquim Bensaude and his reprints of old and rare nautical guides, it is clear that, in addition to the discovery of lands and seas, the Portuguese developed for themselves the science which made it possible, and that they did not derive their knowledge from foreigners, save at the beginning of their maritime activities.

The world-map shows the coasts and principal places found or visited by them until the middle of the sixteenth century, and it follows modern Portuguese maps of the same kind, but with some omissions. For instance, the discoveries of Magellan in his voyage of circumnavigation are not marked, because they were made under the Spanish flag. The second map is derived from Major and the fourth from one in Ravenstein's work on Vasco da Gama, but the outward route as there shown has been slightly deflected at Terra Alta to secure

exactitude. It should be observed that both the routes traced are conjectural, since the authorities give no precise information, and it is possible that da Gama took a course nearer to the coast of Brazil on his way to the East. The third map marks only the points referred to in the text and not the many others reconnoitred and named by the two navigators.

My wife, Dr. J. A. Williamson, and Mr. V. T. Harlow read the proofs, and I have to thank them for useful criticisms and information. Professor E. G. R. Taylor and Mr. E. A. Reeves kindly looked through Chapter XIV and used their special knowledge of some of the matters there treated to make corrections, while Mr. E. Heawood has been good enough to identify the position of towns in the interior of Africa no longer existing.

Since the remarks on page 156 were written, the Portuguese government has resolved to commemorate the life-work of Prince Henry by erecting a more imposing monument at or near Cape St. Vincent. This decision has been taken in response to suggestions which have been frequently made by Portuguese and foreigners, and I am very pleased to be able to announce that a debt long due is to be paid.

E. P.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE ROYAL AND MERCHANT NAVY, AND EARLY VOYAGES	3
II. THE EXPEDITION TO CEUTA. THE AIMS OF HENRY THE NAVIGATOR	15
III. MADEIRA, THE CANARIES AND THE AZORES .	35
IV. FROM BOJADOR TO CAPE VERDE	54
V. VOYAGES FROM 1445 TO 1448 .	76
VI. FIRST VOYAGE OF ALVISE DA CADAMOSTO .	94
VII. SECOND VOYAGE OF CADAMOSTO. DIOGO GOMES AND ANTONIO DA NOLL. DISCOVERY OF THE CAPE VERDE ISLANDS	122
VIII. LIFE AT CEUTA. THE CONQUEST OF ALCACER. HENRY'S DEATH AND CHARACTER	146
IX. THE TWENTY YEARS AFTER PRINCE HENRY'S DEATH	173
X. PROGRESS UNDER JOHN II. THE VOYAGES OF DIOGO CÃO. THE SEARCH FOR PRESTER JOHN. THE VOYAGE OF BARTHOLOMEW DIAS .	199
XI. WESTWARD EXPLORATION	227
XII. THE FIRST VOYAGE OF VASCO DA GAMA .	248
XIII. NORTH AMERICA, BRAZIL AND THE ORIENT .	270
XIV. NAVIGATION, CARTOGRAPHY, SHIPS AND SEAMEN	315
INDEX	337

MAPS

	FACING PAGE
1. THE WORLD: COASTS AND PLACES DISCOVERED OR VISITED BY THE PORTUGUESE	3
2. THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA, ILLUSTRATING THE VOYAGES OF HENRY'S SEAMEN	172
3. THE VOYAGES OF DIOGO CÃO AND BARTHOLOMEW DIAS	226
4. THE VOYAGES OF VASCO DA GAMA AND PEDRO ALVAREZ CABRAL	266

THE PORTUGUESE PIONEERS

CHAPTER I

THE ROYAL AND MERCHANT NAVY, AND EARLY VOYAGES

FEW facts are recorded about the early maritime history of the kingdom of Portugal, but we know that in addition to coastal navigation trade was carried on with the North of Europe and with the Mediterranean countries, principally from Lisbon and Oporto, which were busy commercial centres. Portuguese merchants founded a factory at Bruges and frequented Marseilles in the twelfth century, while in the thirteenth they were established in the French Channel ports. In 1226 more than 100 safe-conducts were granted them in England.¹ To this as to other countries Portugal sent hides, skins, dried fruits, oil, cork and wine. The first king, Afonso Henriques (1128-85), must have had a primitive navy, for tradition says that D. Fuas Roupinho captured a fleet of Moorish galleys off Cape Espichel, seized others at Ceuta, and later on in a fight with fifty-four Moorish vessels in the Strait of Gibraltar was defeated and killed. In 1189 Sancho I contributed forty galleys, galliots and other vessels to a crusading fleet for the capture of Silves, capital of the Algarve. Sancho II is reputed to have established an arsenal, and under Afonso III a fleet of large ships of the royal navy, some at least of which had been built in Lisbon, took part in the

¹ For the trade between these two countries *vide* Shillington and Chapman, *The Commercial Relations of England and Portugal* (London, 1907).

investment of Faro. Documents of his reign describe various kinds of vessels under the names of barks, ships and caravels, and the designation *naves*, meaning vessels of a fair tonnage, appears for the first time.

Under Diniz, the greatest of the medieval kings, the fighting and mercantile marine developed considerably and vessels were graded downwards in size as *naves*, *navios* and *baixéis*; *barcas* of 100 tons and upwards sailed to Spain, France, Normandy and England; and in 1293 this monarch accepted a generous suggestion of his merchants that it was for 'God's service and the good of the land' that they should pay a tax on the goods they exported. Diniz had a pine forest planted near Leiria to protect the fields from the invasion of sand from the shore and supply wood for ship-building, and he encouraged the latter by conferring the privilege of knighthood on officers and even on artisans employed on constructions. It is possible, as some chroniclers say, that he kept a regular fleet at sea to guard the coast against pirates, and we know that he was the first to appoint an admiral in the person of Nuno Fernandes Cogominho, a fact which shews that the navy had already attained a certain importance. When Cogominho died, the King applied for a substitute from Genoa, then the leading naval power, whose subjects were employed by the kings of Castile and France to reorganise their navies. His choice fell on Manoel Pessanha, or Pezagno, a noble and a man of repute in his profession, who in the contract made with him on 1 February 1317 undertook to provide twenty *sabedores do mar*,¹ to command the galleys, which then formed the fighting force. The office was expressed to be a hereditary one, and with it went the grant of a large

¹ Men with experience of the sea.

tract of land in Lisbon with the privileges of a *couto*, that is exemption from the ordinary jurisdiction of the King's officers of justice, and a salary of 3000 *libras* (480,000 *reis*). The admiral must have soon earned the confidence of the monarch, for in 1319 the town and castle of Odemira was bestowed on him. In 1320 he went as ambassador to the Pope at Avignon to ask for a subsidy for the fleet, and in 1322 he received an increase of salary. Four years later Afonso IV sent him on a diplomatic mission to Edward II of England to negotiate a marriage between his daughter and the future Edward III which did not take place, and in 1337 he commanded the fleet which was defeated by the Castilians in a battle off Cape St. Vincent.

The admiral had brought over to Portugal members of leading Genoese families, and the first ocean voyage of which we have a record was probably carried out under their auspices. It took place in 1341 and its destination was the Canaries, which were known to the ancients as the Fortunate Islands and had been visited by the Lisbon wanderers, or Maghrurin from Moslem Spain, some time before the capture of Lisbon in 1147. In 1270 the Genoese Malocello rediscovered them and built a castle there, and the island which bears his name appears with the Genoese flag on fourteenth- and fifteenth-century maps. It is possible that he was followed by the brothers Vivaldi in 1291, for Petrarch refers to an armed Genoese fleet which had reached the group a generation before. According to the account of the poet Boccaccio,¹ based on letters of Florentine merchants at Seville, the expedition of 1341 consisted of two vessels supplied by the King of Portugal and

¹ Printed several times and lastly by Signor R. Caddeo in *Le navigazioni atlantiche di Alvise da Cà da Mosto* (Milan, 1929).

a smaller vessel manned by Florentines, Genoese, Castilians and other Spaniards. It was led by a Genoese, Niccoloso da Recco, and a Florentine, Angiolino de Corbizzi, and left Lisbon on 1 July. The little fleet carried horses, arms and warlike engines for storming towns and castles; it went in search of the islands, said to have been already found, and on the fifth day, with a favourable wind, land was seen.

Recco estimated that the islands were about 900 miles from the city of Seville. The first island appeared to be almost 150 miles in circumference. It was rough and stony, but full of goats and other animals, and the men and women were naked and savage in their habits. There the mariners obtained most of the skins that they took back, but they dared not penetrate into the interior. When they reached a larger island, a great multitude came down to the shore to meet them. Some, superior to the rest, were clothed in goats' skins coloured yellow and red, and as far as could be seen from a distance, the skins were fine and soft and sewn with much art. To judge from their actions, these people seemed to have a ruler to whom they shewed respect. They evinced a desire to trade, and the smallest of the vessels drew near to the shore, but as the Europeans did not understand a word of the language, they dared not disembark. Some of the islanders, however, swam off to the ship and were seized and taken back to Europe. Rounding the island, the mariners found the northern part better cultivated than the southern. The houses were built of square stones with wonderful art, and covered with large and beautiful pieces of wood. Finding the doors shut, the mariners broke them open with stones, which so enraged the inhabitants that they filled the air with their cries. The houses were clean inside,

as if they had been whitewashed. A little temple was also found, without any painting or other ornament except a stone statue of a man with a ball in his hand, who wore an apron of palm leaves. This they seized and carried to Lisbon. On leaving this island they saw several others in the distance, ten, twenty and forty miles off, and went to a third where they found nothing but very lofty trees. Another contained many streams and excellent water, but as it was deserted they did not penetrate far into it. Next they saw an island with rocky mountains covered generally by clouds, but in clear weather it looked very beautiful and appeared to be inhabited. Afterwards they passed over to many other islands, some inhabited, others not. Five of the islands were thickly inhabited, and the languages of these people were so different that the inhabitants of one island did not understand those of another, and they had no ships or other means of intercommunication except by swimming. On a further island a marvellous thing appeared, a mountain which was thought to be 30,000 feet high, the whole of it rocky, with what looked like a white citadel on the top. They sailed round this island and, thinking it was an enchantment, dared not land. The islands were not rich, and the expense of the voyage was scarcely covered by what they took home. The four men whom they carried away were young and handsome. The island where they were captured was called Canary, the most populous of all, and the inhabitants were addressed in various languages, but understood none of them. They were robust, brave and seemed very intelligent; when spoken to by signs, they replied in the same manner like mutes; they sang sweetly and danced almost in the French manner; they were gay and agile, and more civilised than many Spaniards. When they came on

board, they set themselves to eat figs and bread, which latter they consumed with relish, although they had never eaten it before; they refused wine and drank only water; they also ate wheat and barley as well as cheese and meat, which were abundant and of good quality. They gave evidence of great good faith and loyalty among themselves, for if one of them received anything to eat, before consuming it he divided it into equal portions and gave a share to each of his companions. The married women wore aprons like the men, but the maidens went naked and unashamed.¹

The expedition returned in November, bringing with it, in addition to the four natives, a quantity of goat- and sheep-skins, tallow, fish oil, red wood and the bark of trees for dyeing.

The account given by Boccaccio, though informing on the nature of the islands and their inhabitants, is silent on other points, and is evidently only a summary of the letters with important omissions. It is unfinished in the only MS. known and suggests many questions which it does not answer. Nevertheless Professor Sir C. R. Beazley is no doubt right in considering this military and exploring expedition as official and the first sent out by a European state.

It had no immediate sequel, probably because a claimant to the islands arose. By medieval law the Pope had the right to dispose of newly found and unoccupied lands, and on 15 November 1344 D. Luis de La Cerda, Count of Talmond and great-grandson of Afonso X of Castile, received from Pope Clement VI a grant of the Canaries under an annual tribute. The Pontiff

¹ The islands visited are supposed to have been Fuerteventura, Grand Canary, Ferro, Gomera and Teneriffe, but eighteen in all are mentioned, and some writers think that the expedition also went to the Azores.

cautiously reserved the rights of third parties, and he wrote to various monarchs, including Afonso IV, asking them to assist the donee. In his reply the King of Portugal stated that his subjects had been the first to discover the islands and that he had intended to send another expedition to conquer them, but that wars with the Moors and Castile had prevented it. Some historians interpret this to mean that the first expedition took place previous to these wars; if so, the voyage of 1341 would be the second. Afonso felt himself aggrieved by the grant to D. Luis, considering that as he and his people had begun the conquest he should have been invited to complete it before others. However, he expressed his readiness to bow to the Papal decision. Notwithstanding this, documents exist to shew that King Fernando reasserted the Portuguese claim in 1370 by bestowing Lanzarote and Gomera on his admiral Lançarote de Franca, and as the natives and Castilians prevented the latter from taking possession, the King in 1376 gave him certain monopolies in Portugal while confirming him in the post of Captain of the same islands.¹ In the fifteenth century, as we shall see, Prince Henry made many attempts to obtain possession of the whole group.

No record exists of ocean voyages during the second half of the fourteenth century, except to the Canaries, but it would be rash to conclude from the silence of the chroniclers that other voyages did not take place. These men made it their business to write of wars and other events touching kings and great lords.² Discovery and

¹ These documents were first printed by Professor Fortunato de Almeida (*Historia de Portugal*, vol. iii, p. 759 *et seq.*). Doubts have been cast upon their genuineness by Snr. Alfonso de Dornellas, and the fact that they are not registered in the Torre do Tombo needs explanation.

² Zurara only recorded the voyages due to the initiative of Prince Henry.

trading ventures did not interest them, and if undertaken by private individuals would not be mentioned. But unless the voyages continued, the maritime activity displayed early in the fifteenth century and the enthusiasm with which Prince Henry and his followers devoted themselves to the work becomes the more remarkable.

Under Afonso IV, Manoel Pessanha was succeeded in the command of the galleys, or war fleet, by his sons, but the names of two more admirals appear, which indicates that the navy had increased. Under Pedro I, Lançarote Pessanha led squadrons to the help of the King of Castile against Aragon in 1359 and 1364, and *naus* appear for the first time both in war and commerce; in the reign of Fernando they carry artillery. At the battle of Saltes in 1381, the Portuguese fleet consisted of twenty-one galleys, one galleot and four *naus*. The expenditure of Fernando on warships and arsenals found adverse critics in the Cortes of 1372, but those of 1376 shewed interest in the development of the mercantile marine, and the Letter of Privileges he granted on 6 June 1377 seemed to have carried out the views then expressed. This document and the enactment creating a shipping company are matters of such consequence in Portuguese maritime history that they deserve to be described rather fully.

Lisbon was then a free port and as many as 400 or 500 vessels are said to have lain before the city at once, while 100 or 150 loaded salt and wine in the neighbourhood. These vessels were mostly owned by foreigners, and the Portuguese envied the profits made on their freights, while the King desired an increase of the merchant navy so that he could use it in time of war. His ordinance therefore provided that all

who built ships of above 100 tons burden might cut and transport to Lisbon from the royal forests both wood and masts without payment. They were not to pay tithe on the material brought from abroad for constructing and equipping them, and the tithe due from those who bought vessels and from foreigners who sold them to his subjects was remitted. Moreover he made a present to the owners of the ships, on the first voyage they undertook with cargo from the realm, of all the dues on the merchandise they carried, whether it belonged to them or others. In addition, he gave them half the tithe on all the cloth and wood brought from Flanders, France and elsewhere. Furthermore, he exempted them from the obligation to provide horses and do military service by sea or land, save with himself, and they were not to pay tribute, tallage nor excise, save in the work of the walls of the towns where they dwelt. If it happened that the ships which they built or bought perished on the first voyage, these privileges were to endure for the benefit of those who lost them for the three following years if they built or bought others, and as many times as they built or bought them; and if two in partnership built or bought any ship, both were to have these same favours.

Many took advantage of these privileges, according to Fernão Lopes, so that the land was better guarded and its natives became richer on account of the many cargoes that were carried, and as the King wished to increase the number of such ships and prevent ruin to their owners by their wreck, he decided upon the formation of a company to which all of them were to belong. A record was to be kept of all the decked vessels in the realm of above fifty tons, with the date on which they were built, the price they cost, their value and the

day when they were launched. All the profit of these ships was to belong to their owners and mariners, who were to pay two crowns per cent to the purse of the company on all trading profits. The money so raised was to constitute an insurance fund for the benefit of the members, and the King framed detailed regulations to provide for the large variety of claims that might arise.

These regulations exercised an important influence on the formation of sea law in the Mediterranean¹ and later on, in 1474, similar privileges were granted to constructors of ships by Afonso V.

The navy suffered such losses of material and men in the wars of the reign of Fernando that it had to be entirely reconstituted by John I, a process which took many years. When the Castilian investment of Lisbon by land and sea seemed imminent, a squadron of twelve galleys and seven ships was hastily equipped in the Tagus and sent to Oporto lest it should be entrapped by the superior forces of the enemy, and in fact it left the river only just in time. It was reinforced by other vessels in the Douro, and seventeen galleys and the same number of ships were able to break through the Castilian blockade of the Tagus, though the enemy were in largely superior strength, and a few days later mustered sixty-one ships, sixteen galleys, one galleass and various carracks. When the King of Castile retired and the Master of Aviz was seeking an alliance with England, he equipped a fleet of six galleys and eleven ships to assist John of Gaunt in the prosecution of his claims to the throne of Castile. The ships were of unusual size and build, the galleys large and strong;

¹ J. A. Goris, *Les Colonies marchandes méridionales à Anvers de 1488 à 1567* (Louvain, 1925), p. 179.

the biggest had 300 rowers and the smallest 180. Later on, when the Duke of Lancaster left the Peninsula, he was taken to Bayonne by a Portuguese squadron. The truce of 1402 and the peace of 1411 were utilised to add considerably to the number of ships of the fighting and commercial marine, the latter being rendered necessary by the increase in trade; Portuguese vessels of relatively large tonnage transported wine to England and fetched cereals from Italy. Nevertheless when the expedition to Ceuta was being discussed, the King recognised that his naval resources were quite inadequate to transport the number of troops required and he was obliged to hire a large number of foreign vessels. The chronicler Zurara says that fifteen new galleys and fifteen foists were built in the Tagus, while the fleet organised in the Douro by Prince Henry consisted of seven galleys and various ships, but in a charter of King Duarte to Oporto it is stated that the city supplied seventy ships and *barcas* for the enterprise. The number is credible, for Oporto then enjoyed a primacy over other places in shipbuilding. According to Matthew of Pisa, author of the official chronicle of the expedition in Latin, the fleet for Ceuta numbered sixty-three ships, fifty-nine galleys and one hundred and twenty smaller vessels; a large proportion of them were hired foreign craft, and they included eight *naus* and two *barcas* from England and others from Biscay, Galicia and Flanders.¹ The hire of these foreign vessels was paid in salt, which, as we have seen, was one of the principal products of Portugal, and it was bought at a low price in Lisbon by the authorities. As in the time when Crusading fleets came and aided in the work of

¹ *Vide* J. de Salas, *Dos Cartas sobre la expedicion a Ceuta* in *O Instituto*, vol. lxxxi, p. 317.

reconquest against the Moors, so now contact with sailors from the Northern countries and from Galicia and Biscay must have taught the Portuguese useful lessons in the art of navigation, which with their native quickness and power of imitation they would easily learn, and it may have given some of them a stimulus to undertake voyages previously undreamt of.

From an inventory of the contents of the ship *S. Christovam* when it returned from Ceuta, we find that it had three compasses, which shews that when the voyages organised by Prince Henry were about to begin his vessels were prepared to sail out of sight of land.¹ Compasses were in fact used in the Mediterranean at a much earlier period.

¹ This and other details relating to naval matters are derived from *Os Portugueses no mar* by Snr. Quirino da Fonseca (Lisbon, 1926). The designations of the various types of vessels have generally been left in the original language, because Portuguese writers differ as to their meaning and a translation might therefore be erroneous.

CHAPTER II

THE EXPEDITION TO CEUTA—THE AIMS OF HENRY THE NAVIGATOR

JOHN I had five sons and one daughter by Philippa of Lancaster: Duarte, who succeeded him on the throne; Pedro, who acted as Regent during the minority of his nephew Afonso V; Henry, called by English writers 'the Navigator'; Isabel, who married Philip *the Good*, Duke of Burgundy; John and Fernando: while D. Ines Pires, a noble lady, bore him Afonso, Count of Barcellos and Duke of Braganza, and Beatrice, who married the Earl of Arundel. Philippa was a God-fearing and determined woman, imbued with a high sense of duty, who enforced morality at Court and brought up her sons in accordance with her high ideals, so that they deserved the title, bestowed on them by Camões, of 'great Infants'. She took care that, in addition to bodily training, they should receive a clerical education, with the result that they grew up to be men of action and students.

Duarte, though physically robust like his brothers, was more highly strung, and when he reached manhood he suffered from crises of neurasthenia, which inclined him to be melancholy, over-scrupulous in conscience and hesitating in action. The superintendence of the affairs of justice and finance bestowed on him by his father meant a serious burden, but it was bravely borne; 'most days', he tells us, 'I got up very early and after

Mass was in the Court until midday, or thereabouts, and then came to eat, and afterwards I gave audiences for a good space and then retired to my chamber; at 2 o'clock the members of the Council and the Inspectors of Finance were with me and I worked with them until 9 o'clock at night, and when they had left, I was with the officers of my household until 11 o'clock. I did little hunting or shooting and rarely visited the Palace of my father, and then only to see what he was doing and to report to him.' Yet busy as he was, this Christian gentleman managed to snatch time to compose the *Loyal Counsellor*, from which the above extract is taken, and an *Art of Riding*, where he revealed some of the eloquence ascribed to him by the chronicler Ruy de Pina.

Pedro, a practical and ambitious man, more English than Portuguese in character and appearance, wrote a philosophical treatise, the *Book of Virtuous Well-doing*, and spent some years in foreign travel (1425-29), in the course of which he fought against the Turks in the service of the Emperor Sigismund, who gave him the Mark of Treviso as a reward.¹ He visited England and, like his father and brother Henry, obtained the Order of the Garter. Thence he passed to Flanders and Italy, and at Venice the Doge presented him with a copy of Marco Polo's *Travels* and a Mappa Mundi which has not been identified. The nature of the gift indicates that the Doge was aware that Pedro shared Henry's interests.

Fernando was a good Latin scholar and 'so versed in sacred scripture that it seemed to be rather the gift of God than force of study'; in disposition he resembled

¹ The documents are in J. P. Oliveira Martins, *Os filhos de D. João I*; they are not included in the English version by J. J. Abraham and W. E. Reynolds called *The Golden Age of Prince Henry the Navigator* (London, 1914).

Duarte, since he refused a Cardinal's hat from fear that the dignity would be beyond his powers. In virtue he followed Nuno Alvares Pereira, the Holy Constable, for he had the same cult of virginity, the same horror of impurity, which he considered the worst of sins, and the same love of the poor.

Of Henry, the greatest of the Infants in worldly achievement, we possess character sketches by men who knew him, and two contemporary portraits, which will be cited and described in a later chapter. In the meantime we will let his actions speak for him.

When Portugal entered upon her career of expansion across the sea, the three elder sons of John I had already come of age, for Duarte was born in 1391, Pedro in 1392 and Henry in 1394.

The King himself by inclination and profession was an ardent Crusader, and on the termination of the war against his fellow-Christians of Castile he desired to make amends for any offences he had committed against God and, as his chronicler¹ says, felt that he could best do penance by 'washing his hands in Infidel blood'. The Queen had the same hatred of Mohammedanism, whose sectaries had overrun the Peninsula, held it for centuries and continued to infest the neighbouring seas. For defence and counter-attack Christianity had perforce to use the weapon of the Crusade, and hence, according to Zurara, the expedition against Ceuta, which was in contemplation as early as 1409 or 1410.² It happened

¹ The following account of the expedition to Ceuta is based on Zurara's *Cronica de Ceuta* (ed. Esteves Pereira, Lisbon, 1915).

² *Cronica de Ceuta*, cap. 62. In 1410 John I seems to have sent his confessor to inform Pope John XXIII of the project, and in 1413 he obtained from the Pope the appointment of the Queen's confessor as Bishop of Morocco, as though in anticipation of the conquest he had planned. *Vide* Snr. L. Teixeira de Sampayo, *Arquivo de Historia*, vol. i (Coimbra, 1923). Barros

also that the King wished to knight his sons and he had planned to do so during a festival year of jousts and tourneys, for which invitations were to be issued throughout Christendom. But the youths considered that they ought only to receive the honour of chivalry after some great toil; fêtes and games, they said, were very well for the sons of merchants, whose reputation rested on the money they spent. The Treasurer, John Afonso, understood their ambition and suggested an attack on Ceuta, the door by which the Moors had entered Spain in 711, but the King doubted its feasibility; and if the city were taken, could it be held? Moreover there were other difficulties, for its capture would strengthen the rival power of Castile by facilitating the conquest of the Mohammedan kingdom of Granada, because with Ceuta in Christian hands, invading armies from Africa could no longer cross into the Peninsula; again, the Castilians might attack Portugal while she was engaged in war in Morocco. John's display of prudence disappointed his sons, for their minds were set on the enterprise; but he finally resolved to attempt it, and with a view to reconnoitre the city, he sent ambassadors to Sicily to demand the hand of the Queen for his son Pedro, knowing that the request would be refused. On the way there and back they were to stop at Ceuta and examine its position and approaches. On their return they presented their report, and one of them, the Prior of the Hospitallers, sought to illustrate it. No map was available and he could not draw one, so he asked for some bags of sand, a skein, six litres of beans and a porringer, and with these he designed the city, its hills, walls, houses and castle.

(*Asia*, dec. I, bk. i, cap. 2) says that John had nourished the idea for a long time.

The explanations given satisfied John, but before taking a final decision he required the consent of the Queen and the Constable. The Queen approved, and only demurred when her husband announced his intention to accompany his sons. The Constable said: 'I think this affair was not discovered by you or any other mortal, but was revealed by God'. John did not consult the Cortes, for success depended on secrecy, and as he could not impose a new tax without the consent of the people, he obtained money for the enterprise by seizing all the copper and silver he could find, and by importing some from abroad and having it coined at the mint. There was no difficulty in providing soldiers, for the peace had left thousands idle; they would not return to their former avocations and were a grave problem for the national economy and a danger to order. The older men had welcomed the end of the war, the younger disliked it and regretted the loss of the chance to plunder the Castilian border. The expedition to Ceuta gave scope to the latter, and to supplement their numbers, criminals were pardoned if they shared in the expedition or if they remained in garrison after the capture of the city.¹

In addition to the reasons for the enterprise alleged by Zurara and those just mentioned, it is probable that others existed; the repression of piracy in the Strait was one of them, and as it interested foreigners as well as Portuguese, the former lent their aid to it. Moreover Ceuta was a commercial emporium and the termination of various caravan routes, including that to the region

¹ *Ordenações do Rey Affonso V*, bk. v, tit. 83 and 84. The first volume of the *Documentos das Chancellarias Reais anteriores a 1531 relativos a Marrocos* (ed. Pedro de Azevedo, Coimbra, 1915) contains 136 pardons and 144 commutations of penalty, mostly for services in Ceuta. After 1431 many convicts were sent to Ceuta.

of gold in the interior. If, however, it was hoped to tap this trade, the hope proved vain, for the capture of the city led to its diversion to other ports.¹

It was not until 1415 that the King submitted the matter to his Council. After the Constable and Duarte had spoken in favour of it, the views of the other councillors were invited; none of them opposed, and John Gomes da Silva, an ardent spirit, stood up and said: 'I do not know that I can say anything but go ahead, grey horses'—an allusion to the grey heads of the King and his councillors.

The preparations for the expedition, which were on a large scale, alarmed the other Peninsular states, which sent envoys to try and discover its destination. One of them, Ruy Diaz de Vega, envoy of Fernando I of Aragon, wrote a detailed report of the naval and military forces, the stockade and wooden castle of five stories on wheels, and came to the conclusion that the objective was either Ceuta or Gibraltar, the conquest of which was a dream of John I.

To hide from the Moors what was intended, the King sent a challenge to the Duke of Holland, whose subjects had committed robberies on Portuguese shipping, instructing the envoy to inform the Duke privately of the real destiny of the fleet. Ships were hired from abroad and others collected or built at home to carry the expeditionary force, which consisted of the King's vassals and contingents furnished by the nobles and towns. Such was the general enthusiasm and eagerness

¹ In his able and in some ways original chapter in the new illustrated *Historia de Portugal*, vol. iii, Dr. Jaime Cortesão observes that the Paris atlas of Abraham Cresques (1375-77) has inscriptions referring to the voyage of Jaime Ferrer in 1346 in search of the Rio do Ouro and to the kingdom of Mandinga and the gold in those parts. This atlas may be presumed to have been known to and to have influenced the Portuguese at this time.

to serve, that a man of ninety presented himself with his squires and retainers, and Zurara remarks: 'I know not if I speak like a pagan, but surely I think that the bones of the dead desired to be clothed with flesh, where they lay spent in their sepulchres, that they might accompany their sons and relations in that enterprise'.

'The fervour', he adds, 'was so great that the people worked at nothing else, some in cleaning their arms, others in making biscuits and salting meat, others in repairing ships and arranging crews, so that nothing should be wanting in time of need. But this traffic was chiefly in the cities of Lisbon and Oporto, for hardly anyone there was exempt from this labour, and when the weather was calm the noise could easily be heard in most of the places in the Tagus valley. And indeed it was a fair thing to see, for all along the riverside lay ships, great and small, on which by day and night caulkers and others were working to repair their defects; near them lay many slaughtered oxen and cows, and many men were engaged in skinning and cutting up and salting them, while others packed them in barrels and boats for the voyage. The fishermen and their wives were salting various kinds of fish, and every free bit of ground was covered with them. The officials of the mint never had their hammers quiet by day or night, so that if a man shouted among the furnaces, he could hardly be understood; and the coopers had no small toil in making and repairing barrels for the wine and meat and other goods, and the tailors and clothworkers in preparing cloth and making liveries of various kinds, each as his master directed, and the carpenters in packing bombards and guns and preparing all other sorts of artillery, which were many and great, and the ropemakers in making many kinds of cords

for the ships.' Old worked as well as young, and many were the conjectures as to the purpose of the expedition; the only man who suggested its real destination was a Jew, servant of Queen Philippa, called Juda Negro, a great troubadour; but men thought he did not know it so much by any certain sign he saw, as by astrology, in which he dabbled much.¹

In the summer, when the fleet was ready, the Queen, then aged fifty-three, fell sick of the plague; and feeling that her end was near, she sent for her sons, and delivered to them swords and fragments of the true Cross, enjoining them to preserve their faith and to fulfil the duties of their rank.

It was very sadly that the youths promised to obey their mother's behests and received her blessing, and the King was so grieved by the mortal illness of his wife, with whom he had lived for twenty-seven years with much love and concord, that he could neither eat nor sleep.

In a subsequent chapter² Zurara describes the Queen's end. After she had addressed her sons and they were all beside her bed, the wind began to rise, in such wise that those who were in the house felt it, and the Queen asked what wind it was that blew so, and the Infants said it was the north wind. 'I think', said she, 'that this would be good for your voyage', to which the Infants replied that it was the best that could be. 'How strange a thing', said she, 'that I who so much desired to see the day of your departure and thought to take such pleasure in it, for the will I have to witness your knighthood, as befits your royal state, should now be the cause of hindrance and, moreover, that I should be certain that I cannot see it here.'

¹ *Cronica de Ceuta*, cap. 30.

² *Ibid.* cap. 44.

Duarte demurred to this, but the Queen insisted in her belief that it was not God's will, and, like one who had no more care for temporal things, began to say: 'I shall mount aloft and from aloft shall see you, and my illness will not hinder your journey, for you will start on the Feast of St. James'.

Her end was what all might envy. She had received the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Extreme Unction on a Wednesday, and on the next day, shortly after twelve, she sent for the priests and directed them to begin the office for the dead. 'This she heard with a mind so clear, that when any mistake was made, she corrected it, and as the last prayer was being finished, she straightened out her body and members, raised her eyes to Heaven and without any toil or suffering, gave her soul into the hands of Him who created her, a smile appearing on her mouth as though she disdained the life of this world, for according to the mind of some doctors, he who is to live well, must enter the world weeping and leave it smiling.'¹

The fleet left the Tagus on St. James's Day, 25 July 1415, as the Queen had foretold. It consisted of more than 200 vessels, great and small, carrying 45,000² men; some foreign nobles and adventurers were of the company, including Oswald von Wolkenstein, the Tyrolese poet, and one Mundy, an Englishman, who brought four ships with him. When passing Cape St. Vincent, sails were lowered in homage to the saint whose body had lain there before it was taken to Lisbon, and the fleet came to anchor in Lagos Bay, famous in English as well as Portuguese naval history. Here the King called on his chaplain, Frei John Xira, to set forth

¹ *Cronica de Ceuta*, cap. 45.

² Ruy Diaz de Vega estimated the number at 19,000.

the objects of the expedition. The sermon, which Zurara purports to transcribe, was naturally a crusading one, its conclusion being that he who held himself to be a Catholic and true Christian and did not prepare to defend the Faith with all his strength was not a true knight, or member of Jesus Christ, had no part with Him and was worse than an infidel.

On 12 August the light craft arrived off the African coast, but a strong wind carried the heavier up the Mediterranean. This was a piece of good fortune for the Christians, because, fearing an attack, the Moors had hurried up reinforcements from the interior, and dismissed them when they saw the Portuguese fleet pass through the Strait apparently bound for some other destination. Ceuta consisted of two parts, a citadel and a port town, which covered the neck of a long peninsula running out some three miles from the mainland; and a point at the junction of these had been selected as the landing-place.¹ On the eve of the Feast of the Assumption, the whole armada was brought into the roads. Henry anchored off the lower town with the vessels from Oporto, while the King, notwithstanding a wound in the leg, had himself rowed through the fleet and gave orders for the assault. During the night the governor of Ceuta ordered lights to be displayed in the windows of every house, to shew that the city was well peopled and to frighten the enemy; to this the Portuguese responded by illuminating their ships. At day-break on 15 August the Christians disembarked, and after a fierce tussle on the beach, drove the Moors back through the Almina gate and entered the city with them. Thereupon Henry, according to Zurara, took the

¹ Edrisi gives a description of the city before its conquest by the Portuguese and refers to its fisheries and the coral found in the adjacent seas.

lead and, after consultation with his brother Duarte, ordered bodies of troops to operate in different parts of the city and occupy the heights outside, while he himself with another force attacked the enemy in the main street leading to the Citadel. He had made good progress when the Moors rallied and falling upon his men put them to flight. The latter then went off to plunder or relieve their thirst, which was very great owing to the heat and the salt fish they had eaten on board, and Henry found himself with only seventeen knights and personal attendants, and was in grave danger. For hours he had to maintain a struggle against enormous odds, in which, though wounded, he shewed his exceptional courage and bodily strength under the fierce rays of the African sun. A report of his death was actually conveyed to the King, who replied that it did not greatly matter, since he had ended as a soldier should.

After receiving some small reinforcements, Henry continued the fight with success, but as it was impossible to penetrate into the Citadel, the gates of which were closed and walls well garrisoned, he was persuaded to retire and join Duarte, who had taken possession of the Mosque, which afterwards became the Cathedral.

The day was now far spent and Ceuta almost entirely in the hands of the Christians, and a council was held to decide whether an attempt should be made to storm the Citadel, with the result that it was agreed to postpone it until the next day. In the meantime the Moors had recognised their defeat and evacuated both city and Citadel, and a Portuguese detachment sent to guard the approach to the latter noticed a flock of sparrows quietly resting there, from which they judged it to be empty of human beings. On reaching the gates these were opened by the only two men who remained inside, and at night-

fall the banner of St. Vincent, which was that of Lisbon, flew from the highest tower. Though the struggle had been severe, the Portuguese loss in killed was only eight, which is attributed to the fact that most of them wore armour. The King offered to knight Henry first for his prowess, but he declined to receive the honour before his eldest brother; and the Infants obtained knighthood in order of birth with the swords the Queen had given them.

The ease with which the 'Key of the Mediterranean', as Zurara calls it, was taken may well have seemed providential to the captors, and the future of Portugal perhaps hung upon the issue of the attempt. Had it failed, the expedition might have been the last instead of merely the first step in the foundation of an overseas empire. As an English historian says, the fall of Ceuta struck a resounding blow through Europe. It drove the Moors from their most threatening stronghold, smoothed the way for African trade, and led to the immense developments of the most glorious age of Portugal's colonial history.¹

It was obvious to all that the defence of the town would be a far more difficult and dangerous affair than its capture, and no one was ambitious to undertake the charge. While the King and his advisers were debating the matter, the young nobles amused themselves by a game of *choca*,² and when D. Pedro de Menezes won, he lifted up his olive-wood stick and the group surrounding him shouted *aleo*. On hearing that the Council

¹ Wylie, *Reign of Henry the Fifth*, vol i, p. 451. The fifth centenary of the capture of Ceuta was celebrated in Portugal in 1915 and the Academy of Sciences published seven volumes of documents and tracts relating to Morocco.

² *Choca* is a ball which has given its name to the game, played with a stout stick called *aleo*.

had come to no decision, he went to John I and offered to hold Ceuta with the stick he had been playing with. The King took it from him and handed it back, saying that with it he appointed him captain of the town and would not demand the usual oath because he trusted him entirely; further than this he made him Count of Viana and gave him a garrison of 2500 men. The word *aleo* became from that day the war-cry and the family device of Pedro and his descendants; it was engraved on the swords of the men and the jewels of the women and sculptured on their houses, and it figures on Pedro's tomb in the Graça church at Santarem.

As Henry was a crusader by disposition, and his office of Governor of the Order of Christ laid an obligation on him to make war on the infidel, the capture of Ceuta apparently facilitated his task by providing an open door into the enemy's territory. But if Barros is well informed, he thought otherwise. After that expedition the conquest of Morocco had become a state enterprise in which he could only serve as a mandatory of the King and government, and he preferred an undertaking of his own and in more remote parts, in which the expense would be his and not controlled by others, and where the merit and glory would belong to himself and his Order. Even if this be true, however, it did not prevent him from overlooking affairs in Ceuta, defending it and pursuing the crusade in North Africa when the opportunity occurred, as we shall see later on.¹

We do not know exactly when he began his maritime explorations, though Barros says that, even before 1415, he sent out ships down the west coast of Africa and, Cadamosto adds, to raid the towns of Safi and Messa. Faria e Sousa dates the first voyage from 1412,

¹ Though the town had its captain, Zurara calls Henry governor.

and declares that in this year the Portuguese reached Cape Bojador, sixty leagues beyond Cape Non; but he wrote in the seventeenth century, too long after the event to carry weight. According to Diogo Gomes, D. John de Castro made his attempt on the Canaries in 1415 and not in 1425, and as he reported the existence of a strong current between the islands, Henry sent out Gonçalo Velho in 1416 to find out the reason of it, the first scientific expedition of this kind recorded. He adds that this man afterwards reached a spot called Terra Alta, but better evidence shews that Cape Bojador was not passed until much later. From Zurara we learn that from the time Ceuta was taken, Henry always kept vessels at sea to guard the coast against Moorish pirates.

His continuous exploring activities began only after that event and probably after he had raised the siege set to the town by the Moors in 1418-19, and failed to realise his ambition to capture Gibraltar. To the knowledge he had derived at home and from books about the lands to the South, he added information gained at Ceuta from men who had actually visited them. Moors told him of the journeys of traders from the Mediterranean coast to Timbuktu and Cantor on the Gambia, and of the regions as far as Guinea, and he compared and checked the notices he received from one traveller and another with those of the captives his men brought home, and so was able to guide his mariners to the Senegal years afterwards. In order to supervise the preparation of the expeditions which he had resolved to despatch regularly on a preconceived plan, he abandoned the Court after his return to Portugal in 1418 and fixed his abode in or near Lagos in the Algarve, of which province John I made him governor in 1419; and later on he built a small town called Villa do Infante

at Cape St. Vincent. The geographical position of these places, and the fact that ships both Portuguese and foreign put in there to refit, made them ideal bases of operations. There, immersed in the study of mathematics and cosmography, he passed the years, varied by occasional visits to Court and to his properties in other parts of the kingdom to receive his rents and administer justice; there he selected captains and pilots, generally from members of his own household, caused them to be instructed, and with each fresh discovery had his charts brought up to date. This last task was performed by Master Jacome, an expert cartographer and maker of nautical instruments, whom he persuaded to come from Majorca and enter his service in exchange for a high salary. Jacome has been identified with Jahuda Cresques, son of Abraham Cresques, author of the Catalan map of 1375.¹ Though Henry was a healthy man, we find him in later years surrounded by doctors, mostly Jews, and as medicine and astrology then went together, it is probable, as Dr. Cortezão thinks, that these men helped him in his studies of nautical astronomy.

According to Zurara, the first object he set before himself was the finding of Guinea, but this does not mean that he then or afterwards looked no further, for in view of the policy of secrecy adopted by the Portuguese in respect of their discoveries, no arguments can fairly be based on the silence of the chroniclers. Five reasons impelled him thereto: he desired (1) to obtain knowledge of the lands beyond the Canaries and Bojador, his sailors having already passed Cape Non, the fabled limit of previous navigation; (2) to establish trading relations with any Christians who might dwell there; (3) to ascertain the bounds of Mohammedan

¹ Gonçalo de Reparaz, *Mestre Jacome de Malhorca* (Coimbra, 1930) *passim*.

dominion; (4) to find a Christian king who would help him to fight the infidel; and (5) to spread the Christian faith. His ends were thus scientific, commercial, political and religious. Zurara puts the scientific first, but expressly says that even there he was moved by the service of God and the King, and there can be little doubt that in Henry's mind the advance of knowledge was primarily a means to an end. He sought to stay the advance of Islam and to promote the prosperity of his country by obtaining for it the trade in gold dust and other African products which was then in Arab hands. By the 'discovery' of Guinea he hoped to divert the trade routes from the Mediterranean ports to those of West Africa, and commercial considerations dictated his colonisation of the Atlantic islands, as is shewn by his efforts to develop the industries of fishing, dyeing and sugar-making. In his offensive against Islam he followed the plan, formulated from the time of the Crusades by men like William Adam, Raymond Lull and Marino Sanuto, and pursued, though without result, by popes and kings, of attacking on the flank and in the rear as well as on the front; and his object may even have extended in later life to control of the Indian trade, the main source of the enemy's wealth.¹

At that time Mohammedan dominion was interposed between Europe and the East and had cut the communications which previously existed between them. Its growing power represented a menace to civilisation which may be compared to that of Bolshevism at the present day, though the danger then came from armed force, and now from the infiltration of ideas subversive of religion and morality, which are even more difficult to combat. But though Henry was mainly bent on

¹ Sir C. R. Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. iii, p. 310 *et seq.*

crusading and the development of commerce, he possessed the curiosity of the man of science and sought opportunities to satisfy it. We have instances of this in the expedition of Gonçalo Velho, already mentioned, and in the case of the Azores, the discovery of which Diogo Gomes attributes to the Infant's desire 'to know the distant parts of the Western Ocean, if islands or land existed beyond those described by Ptolemy'. Even there, however, his ends were utilitarian: the route through the Canaries was the shortest to the coast of West Africa and afterwards it was regularly used, while discovery to the West was part of the policy of expansion and might open a route to the Indies.

The inception of the maritime expeditions is described by Duarte Pacheco in *Esmeraldo* and by Barros in *Asia*. One night the Infant lay sleepless in bed, pondering over his schemes, and at last, as if roused by a sudden fury, he leapt up, called his servants and ordered some ships to be made ready at once for a voyage southward along the coast of Morocco; all were astonished and attributed this outburst to a divine revelation. Goes, a humanist of the Renaissance, possessed of a critical mind and positive outlook, refers to the story but rejects it. According to him, Henry desired to find India; the accounts of Herodotus and other ancient writers convinced him that it had been reached by the circumnavigation of Africa, and this 'certainty', together with the information he had obtained from natives well versed in African affairs, led him to order the rediscovery of the forgotten route. But, revelation or no revelation, there is little doubt that the East was Henry's ultimate aim, though Goes does not seek to explain his motives. And the attempt was no novelty; even apart from the classical voyages, at least

one expedition had gone out in the Middle Ages to find the sea way, that of Doria and Vivaldi in 1291. The enterprise may have appeared to him all the more feasible, because he could have had no accurate idea of the distance, since according to some cartographers Africa was a peninsula about half its real size, that is, the southern coast of Guinea continued directly to the Indian Ocean. Even in the Laurentian Portolan of 1351, the best medieval map of the continent, the latter is shewn with a short leg.¹ Henry had studied the geographical works cited by Zurara, and from them and from Marco Polo must have drawn inspiration. The abundance and precision of the data he had collected account for the persistence he shewed and for his refusal to be daunted by failures, hostile criticism and heavy expense. He knew that caravans crossing the Sahara had long traded with the Guinea coast, so that if his ships could reach it they would be well on the way to the East and might hope to find Prester John and secure his assistance. Contact between the Holy See and Ethiopia had been established early in the fourteenth century, and plans had been formulated to make its ruler the ally of Christendom against Islam; envoys of Prester John appeared in the Peninsula in 1427 and 1450, and one was in Lisbon in 1452. The presence of this man suggests that Henry had previously opened up relations with Ethiopia, and he may have done so through those envoys or through the representatives of the same country at the Council of Ferrara. Moreover, we learn from Zurara that inhabitants of the greater and lesser India, that is Indians proper and

¹ Even this leg was perhaps added at a later date. A copy of this map may have been brought back by the Infant Pedro and been the one which, according to Antonio Galvão, helped Henry in his discoveries.

Ethiopians, visited Portugal and received the Prince's hospitality, and that Indians travelled in his ships.¹

As we have said, Henry had also commercial aims, and, hearing that the King of Tunis obtained a large quantity of gold from somewhere, he despatched secret agents to that realm to make enquiry, and learnt that the King, in exchange for merchandise sent to the south across the Atlas mountains, received slaves and gold; therefore he resolved to do by sea what the King had for many years done by land!²

At the time Henry entered upon his work of exploration the greater part of Africa was a *terra incognita* to Christian Europe. Overland travellers, mostly Moslems, had penetrated to the coast as far south as the Senegal, but if a line were drawn from the mouth of that river to the lower waters of the Niger and then across to the east coast a little below Abyssinia, the whole of the continent to the south was entirely unknown, save a narrow strip of the eastern coast down to Sofala, frequented by Arab traders. In less than a century from their start the Portuguese mapped the coastline, dotting it with names, many of which are still in use, and explored part of the interior. This great contribution to geographical science was one of the achievements of Henry the Navigator and his successors.

Before entering upon a relation of the maritime expeditions made under his auspices it is natural to ask ourselves how far their results may have been anticipated, and the reply is that the undoubted pre-Henrician voyages down the west coast of Africa were very few.

¹ Sir C. R. Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. iii; M. C. de la Roncière, *La Découverte de l'Afrique au moyen âge*, vol. i, p. 62 *et seq.*; *Chronicle of Guinea* (Hakluyt Society), cap. 2.

² Dr. J. Münzer, *Itinerarium in O Instituto*, vol. lxxxiii, p. 141 (Coimbra, 1932).

The Phoenicians, who were sent out by Pharaoh Necho, may have rounded the Cape of Good Hope, but Hanno probably got no farther than Sierra Leone; in medieval times Ibn Fatima seems to have reached Cape Branco, but the Genoese Malocello did not pass beyond the Canaries, while Doria and Vivaldi disappeared, so that it is impossible to fix their furthest south. The voyages of the men of Dieppe in the fourteenth century are not proven, owing perhaps to the destruction of records, the existing evidence being of too late a date.¹

¹ The question is discussed by Sir C. R. Beazley, *Chronicle of Guinea*, vol. II, p. 64.

CHAPTER III

MADEIRA, THE CANARIES AND THE AZORES

THE identity of the discoverer and the date of the discovery of Madeira and Porto Santo are unknown. All we can say is that the islands appear in the fourteenth century in that imaginary travel-book, the *Conoscimiento de todos los Reynos*,¹ and on Catalan and Italian maps with the same or approximately the same names, and that they were probably found by Portuguese or Spaniards when on their way to or from the Canaries. Possibly the discoverer was a seaman called Machico,² who lived in the time of King Fernando and was 'master of his boat', since a place in Madeira bears this designation. A romantic story exists and has given rise to a small literature, that in the reign of Edward III of England a pair of runaway lovers from Bristol, Robert Machin³ and Ana de Arfet, were driven to Madeira by a storm. According to one version they died there, while their companions succeeded in reaching the coast of Africa and were seized and imprisoned by the Moors. There a fellow-captive, a pilot named Morales, learnt their story, and through his agency it reached Prince Henry, who accordingly sent out the expedition to which we shall refer presently.

¹ There is an English version by Sir Clements Markham (London, 1912: Hakluyt Society).

² Brito Rebello, *Livro da Marinharia* (Lisbon, 1903), p. xxiv.

³ There seems to have been an Italian corsair named Machin in the time of Prince Henry who settled in Portugal.

According to another version, Machin survived to reach Spain and related the discovery he had made. If it really took place, the credit for it would be due to the English and not the Portuguese, and Major, in his life of Prince Henry, not only accepted the story but plumed himself on having established its veracity. There is, however, no mention of Machin in Zurara and Barros, our chief authorities for the early voyages. The Viscount de Santarem did not believe in his existence, and after the exhaustive examination and destructive criticism of the legend by Alvaro Rodrigues de Azevedo in his edition of the *Saudades da Terra* of the island historian Gaspar Fructuoso¹ its supporters must be few. Curiously enough, it derives from Portuguese writers of the sixteenth century, who, however, disagree with each other as to the details. Antonio Galvão,² the most important of these authors, gives the following account in his *Discoveries of the World*³: 'They also say about this time [1344] the island of Madeira which is in 32 degrees was discovered by an Englishman named Machim, who on the way from England to Spain with a woman he had stolen, was driven by a tempest to that island and they anchored in the haven called Monchico after him'. The story grew with each reteller and was finally embellished in the seventeenth century by the polygraph D. Francisco Manuel de Mello, who worked it up into a novelette and included it in his *Epanaphoras*. It was then translated into French and English, and in this and the following centuries the romance passed through various editions.⁴

¹ (Funchal, 1873), p. 340 *et seq.* ² Misnamed in England Galvano.

³ *Vide* p. 58. Hakluyt's old version was reprinted with the Portuguese text in 1862 by Vice-Admiral Bethune (Hakluyt Society).

⁴ They are mentioned in the bibliography to my *D. Francisco Manuel de Mello* (Coimbra, 1914), p. 588. Mello gives a detailed account of Zarco's

Though Zurara is usually minute, he does not elucidate the mystery; the title of chapter 83 of the *Chronicle of Guinea*, describing the expedition of Zarco, is 'Of how the island of Madeira was peopled', and though discovery may be implied, it is not stated. He tells us that when Henry returned to Portugal after raising the siege of Ceuta in 1418, two young squires of his, John Gonçalves Zarco and Tristan Vaz Teixeira, asked for a chance to distinguish themselves, and the Prince bade them prepare a ship and go against the Moors, directing them to sail in search of the land of Guinea. They obeyed and, guided by God, reached Porto Santo in spite of contrary winds, and after examining the island and finding it fit for colonisation, they took back the news to their master. Encouraged by him, they returned with Bartholomew Perestrello, a nobleman of the household of the Infant John, and carried with them animals to stock the island, among them being a pregnant she-rabbit, which littered on board. When landed, the progeny interbred, multiplied quickly and ate up all that was sown. As the conies were too numerous to be destroyed, the two captains abandoned Porto Santo in the following year and passed over to Madeira, twelve leagues off, and there Zarco and Teixeira remained, while Perestrello went home. The larger island proved to have good air, plenty of water and a rich soil, so that abundant crops rewarded the labour bestowed on it. Henry supplied colonists and priests and divided the island into two captaincies, giving one to Zarco and the other to Teixeira;¹ and Perestrello, who subsequently voyages, which would seem to be a pure invention of his own, unless he drew on sources now unknown to us.

¹ *Alguns Documentos da Torre do Tombo*, etc. (Lisbon, 1892), p. 7. The grants to Zarco and Teixeira speak of them only as colonisers, which appears to settle the question.

returned to Porto Santo, obtained its captaincy from the same source.¹

Diogo Gomes,² a contemporary of Zurara, considers Zarco and Teixeira merely as colonisers. According to him, a caravel in the time of Henry, driven out of its course by a storm, came upon Porto Santo, which contained many trees that emitted a beautiful red resin called dragon's blood; and shortly after the Infant sent another to explore the island, and from there the mariners passed over to Madeira. Writing more than half a century later, Barros³ speaks of Zarco and Teixeira as discoverers. He says that they asked Henry for a ship in which they could sail along the coast of Barbary and Guinea, which he gave them, knowing from Ptolemy and native information that it ran down to the equator. They encountered so severe a storm and such contrary winds on their way to the African coast, that they gave up all hope of life, for the vessel was small and the heavy seas almost devoured it. Finally, however, the storm ceased, and they discovered the island of Porto Santo, a name they gave because it proved a refuge after their terrible experiences. He remarks that they were glad to find that it had no fierce people like those of the Canaries, that is, it was uninhabited; and both Zurara and Gomes imply the same of Madeira by saying that birds could at first be captured in the hand. None of the three writers records the existence of any sign that men had formerly lived there. Barros is more explicit than Zurara or Gomes as to the way in which Madeira was found. He says that after their return to Porto Santo with settlers, Zarco and

¹ *Alguns Documentos*, p. 10.

² In *De insulis primo inventis in mari oceano occidentis*. The origin of this work is described in cap. 7, where the voyages of Gomes are dealt with.

³ *Asia*, dec. I, bk. i, cap. 2.

Teixeira noticed a dark shadow on the horizon, which appeared to be either a heavy cloud, or land, and that they then built two boats and passed over to the island, which took its name from the quantity of trees upon it.¹ They landed at separate points, and when Barros wrote, their descendants were still disputing over the achievements of the explorers on this occasion, but not over their military merits, for both men had distinguished themselves at the capture of Ceuta and in the attack on Tangier and had gained the honour of knighthood. Zurara and Barros agree that the work of settlement began in 1420, and the former declares that at the time he was writing the *Chronicle of Guinea*, Madeira had 150 heads of families. When Cadamosto visited the island in 1455 he found four settlements and 800 inhabitants. There is an old tradition that Henry instituted family registers for the settlers.

According to Gomes and Barros, the latter set fire to the dead leaves, undergrowth and trees in the district of Funchal to clear the soil for sowing and ascertain its value, but could not extinguish the blaze, which continued to smoulder for seven or nine years. We need not take these figures literally, but from the account of Gomes the calamity must have been a very severe one, for on his visit thirty years later he heard that the colonists had only saved their lives by taking refuge in the streams and that in some places the fire was still burning underground. Barros admits that the first settlers profited by the clearance, but states that in his day there was a lack of wood. Zurara,² however, expressly says that wood was sent to Portugal in such quantities as to change the style of building and allow of taller houses being erected, and Cadamosto declares

¹ *Asia*, dec. I, bk. i, cap. 3.

² *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. 2.

that the country was full of furniture made from Madeira wood,¹ so that the conflagration must have been merely local. In addition, the island sent home wheat, wax, honey and sugar. By Henry's order the cane was brought from Sicily and thrived so well that in some years, as Barros says, one-fifth of the sugar produced over 60,000 *arrobas* for the Order of Christ, from only three leagues of ground, though he does not specify the dates.

In 1452 Henry entered into a contract with his squire Diogo de Teive for the building of a water-mill for the manufacture of cane sugar, on condition of receiving a third of the produce; and after the middle of the century sugar began to be exported to foreign countries. It first appears in the Bristol Customs Accounts in 1456 and thenceforward in yearly increasing quantities,² and Madeira sugar competed so successfully with that produced in Sicily and the Levant as to greatly reduce the price of the latter. It was taken by Portuguese vessels as far as Pera, and later purchased from the growers by Genoese and Jewish merchants and sent to Flanders, which was the chief market. The Cortes of 1472-73 and 1481 complained that its export had fallen into the hands of foreigners, who in 1480 loaded twenty large vessels and forty or fifty smaller ones with the article, and they asked the King to prohibit aliens from residing in the island and to provide that the sugar should be taken first to Lisbon and pay duties there. In 1496 the price dropped considerably, and in 1498 King Manoel forbade more than 120,000 *arrobas* to be exported; of this amount he

¹ *La prima navigazione*, cap. 4, and cf. *Saudades da Terra* (ed. Rodrigues de Azevedo), p. 460.

² Shillington and Chapman, *Commercial Relations of England and Portugal*, p. 108.

destined 40,000 for Flanders, 15,000 for Venice, the same quantity for Chios and Constantinople, 13,000 for Genoa and 7000 for England.¹ The sugar industry, which gave the Atlantic islands their first importance, spread from Madeira to the Azores and Cape Verde and finally to Brazil, where it became the chief economic factor until the discovery of diamonds and gold at the end of the seventeenth century.

The Malvoisie grape was introduced from Crete, and when Cadamosto visited the island he described the vines as the finest sight in the world, and even then much of the wine made from them, including the famous Malmsey, went abroad. In the seventeenth century, owing to Brazilian competition, sugar growing ceased to be profitable, the canes were uprooted and replaced by vineyards, and the export of wine became henceforth the principal source of revenue.²

In Porto Santo and Deserta, the third island of the group, the chief industries, started by Perestrello, were the raising of cattle and the export of dragon's blood. By Charters of 26 September 1433 King Duarte gave the islands to Henry for his life, and he conferred the spiritual jurisdiction on the Order of Christ.³ On Henry's death in 1460 the temporalities passed to the crown, and Afonso V bestowed them on his brother Fernando.

The Madeira and Azores groups have always been considered as part of the mother country and have not been included in the colonies.

¹ Gama Barros, *Historia da administração publica em Portugal*, vol. iv, cap. 5. In his edition of the *Saudades da Terra*, Rodriguez de Azevedo has an important note on the cultivation, manufacture and sale of Madeira sugar. See also J. L. de Azevedo, *Épocas de Portugal economico* (Lisbon, 1929), cap. 5.

² A. Z. Simon, *The Bolton Letters* (London, 1928), p. 15.

³ *Alguns Documentos*, p. 2.

Reference has been made in a previous chapter to the Papal grant of the Canaries to D. Luis de la Cerda in 1344. His endeavour to profit by it came to nothing,¹ and though the islands were afterwards raided from time to time by mariners from Spanish ports, no attempt was made at occupation. But in 1402 and the following years Jean de Bettencourt, Lord of Grainville, accompanied by Gadifer de la Salle and a band of Normans, and aided by men and munitions obtained from Castile, made an invasion, built a fort in Lanzarote, and planted colonies there and in Ferro and Fuerteventura.² After having done homage to the King of Castile for the islands, Bettencourt finally returned to France in 1406, and appointed a nephew, Maciot, as governor in his place, and the latter sold his uncle's rights to the Conde de Niebla, a Castilian noble, who in 1430 transferred the ownership to Guillen de las Casas, another Castilian,³ so that when Prince Henry began to send out expeditions down the African coast, he found the representatives of a foreign power established on his flank. In pursuit of his policy of expansion he attempted to take possession of the islands to prevent the Castilians from using them as a base from which to reach Guinea, and the same reasons perhaps dictated the occupation of Madeira. If he needed an excuse for his procedure, he had it in the Moorish attack on Ceuta in 1418-19, which had been instigated by Castile. In the long and complicated

¹ Agustin Millares, *Historia general de las Islas Canarias* (Las Palmas, 1881), p. 16.

² *The Canarian or Book of the Conquest and Conversion of the Canarians*, translated by R. H. Major (London, 1872: Hakluyt Society); cf. Zurara, *Chronicle of Guinea*, caps. 79-82.

³ Agustin Millares, *Historia general de las Islas Canarias* (Las Palmas, 1893), vol. iii. Barros, *Asia*, dec. I, bk. i, cap. 12. M. C. de la Roncière, *La Découverte de l'Afrique au moyen âge*, vol. ii. Sir C. R. Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. iii, p. 445.

struggle that ensued between the two nations we have the first of the contests for possessions beyond the sea that have marked the succeeding centuries. Every weapon, naval, military and diplomatic, was employed, and the story deserves study in much greater detail than it has yet received and than is possible until researches have been made in the Spanish archives.¹

In 1425 Henry sent out D. Fernando de Castro with 2500 men and 120 horses to conquer Grand Canary, but the resistance of the natives and lack of provisions led to the abandonment of the campaign, which was very expensive. According to books of account which Barros saw, the transport alone cost 39,000 gold *dobras*.² In the following year John II of Castile despatched an embassy to Portugal under D. Afonso de Carthagera, Bishop of Burgos, to assert his claims to the archipelago and prevent Henry from renewing his attempts, but the latter sent out another expedition in 1427 under Antonio Gonçalves da Camara which had no more success than the first. He then endeavoured to induce the King of Castile to relinquish his sovereign rights, and, meeting with a refusal, he determined to secure an overriding grant from Pope Eugenius IV, and in 1435 he succeeded in this on the ground that the islands had no owner. King John protested strongly against the action of the Pope, and by his orders the Bishop raised the question of ownership at the Council of Basel. After

¹ *Agustin Millares, op. cit.* vol. 1, p. 33 (ed. 1893), mentions a document at Simancas drawn up by Juan Iniguez de Atabe, ambassador of John II in Lisbon, dealing with the struggle over the islands and the secret history of the negotiations.

² *Asia*, dec. I, bk. i, cap. 12. Diogo Gomes dates the expedition 1415, evidently an error of transcription, and says that afterwards Henry sent out one Alvaro Dornellas who overran part of Gomera. The gold *dobra*, or doubloon, a Spanish coin, was worth 12,800 *reis*.

enumerating the islands, the Bishop asserted that Lanzarote, and, he believed, Fuerteventura, had been occupied in the time of Henry III of Castile by his order, and that he intended afterwards to occupy all of them. The King gave those islands to Bettencourt and other persons authorised by him, and his successor afterwards went to take possession of the islands still unoccupied, which were granted to them with a reservation of the supreme dominion to Castile. All the islands had not yet been occupied from lack of opportunity, but the kings of Castile had always used their best endeavours to get the inhabitants of the first two islands to accept and keep the Catholic Faith, and subjects of theirs had been confirmed as bishops there, including the existing prelate. In 1425 the Portuguese under D. Fernando de Castro equipped an expedition and endeavoured without success to seize, not the islands of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura already in the possession of the King of Castile and of various persons in his name, but others, and chiefly Grand Canary. Later on Prince Henry requested the King to grant him the conquest of those islands, but the latter refused, because the concession would be contrary to the honour of the crown and would mean a dismemberment. After all this the King of Portugal applied to the Pope to bestow the conquest upon him.

According to the Bishop the arguments alleged by the Portuguese in favour of their claims were as follows: unoccupied islands belonged to the first who took them,¹ and as the Canaries had not been occupied by any Catholic prince, the King of Portugal injured no one by taking

¹ This implies that infidels had no rights, a doctrine advanced in an English trial of a West Indian dispute as late as 1647, according to Dr. J. A. Williamson.

possession of them. There were only two ways of acquiring islands, occupation and neighbourhood; as regards occupation, all had been said already, and as to neighbourhood, the islands were nearer to Cape St. Vincent, the extreme point of Portugal, than to any Castilian territory. The inhabitants of the islands had not yet received the Catholic faith, and therefore the Portuguese, who wished to teach it them, ought not to be hindered in their purpose.

The Bishop next set out the grounds on which the King of Castile based his rights; the Canaries belonged to Castile for the same reason as Tingitania, of which they formed a part; it was the nearest land to them, and as Tingitania was a former possession of the Gothic kings, and the kings of Castile were their direct descendants, they had a better claim than Portugal, a kingdom which arose from a grant to Count Henry of Burgundy. The Portuguese kings did not descend immediately by hereditary succession from the Goths, and they only existed in consequence of a donation from the kings of Castile; Prince Henry recognised the rights of Castile when he asked to be allowed to conquer the islands.¹

It was probably in consequence of this exposition and perhaps of other solicitations that in 1436 Eugenius IV sent a bull to King Duarte of Portugal, setting out that he had granted him the conquest of the Canaries because the King had declared that no Christian prince had a right to them, but afterwards John II of Castile complained of the grant on the ground that the conquest belonged to him. The Pope had replied that he had no

¹ Eugenio do Canto, *Allegações feitas contra os portugueses no Concílio de Basilea por D. Affonso, Bispo de Burgos sobre a conquista das Canarias* (Lisbon, 1912), and *Alguns Documentos*, p. 3.

intention of infringing his rights and that the concession had been made on the express understanding that the islands belonged to no one. In conclusion Eugenius admonished Duarte to examine carefully the Apostolic letters and not attempt anything to the prejudice of the King of Castile.¹ Henry was a dutiful son of Holy Church, nevertheless he made an attack on Tangier in 1437, probably to anticipate Castile by securing this important base and to assert the rights of Portugal to the conquest of North-West Africa; and in 1440 he despatched a fleet to the Canaries under D. Diogo da Silva, which was equipped partly by means of loans from the Jewish communities of fifteen towns and partly at the cost of the royal treasury.² No record exists of the achievements of this expedition, but another proceeded to the islands in 1445, received the submission of the chiefs in Gomera, and raided Palma; the incursions against the friendly natives of the former island brought down a severe rebuke from Henry. In the following year he is said to have made a further attempt at conquest, and he obtained from the Regent Pedro a decree forbidding ships to sail to the islands without his leave, and in 1448 he bought Lanzarote from Maciot de Bettencourt,³ who had got it back from Guillen de las Casas. Henry then bestowed the captaincy of this island on his secretary Antão Gonçalves, who took possession of it, but was driven out by the warlike natives. Not content with thus asserting and exercising rights of ownership, Henry allowed and doubtless encouraged the attacks made in 1450, 1451

¹ Bull of Eugenius IV *Dudum cum* of 31 July 1436 in *Alguns Documentos*, p. 3.

² Sousa Viterbo, *Uma expedição portuguesa às Canarias em 1440* in *Arquivo historico portuguez*, vol. i, p. 340.

³ *Alguns Documentos*, pp. 9 and 12.

and 1453 upon the islands which did not recognise Portuguese authority. At the same time he made a further attempt to secure Papal recognition of his claims, and by the bull of 8 January 1454 Nicholas V conceded to Afonso V and Henry their conquests in Africa with 'the islands in the seas adjacent to them from Capes Non and Bojador and as far as Guinea'.

The rivalry between the two powers led to intermittent hostilities at sea, even though they were at peace on land. In 1440 D. Alvaro de Castro was despatched with a fleet against Castilian pirates, and the Portuguese stoutly defended their monopoly of trade on the African coast. In 1452 some caravels of Seville returning from Guinea were met by Palenço, a celebrated sea-rover, who captured one and imprisoned the crew, while a Genoese merchant found on board had his hands cut off. King John II addressed two letters to Afonso V on 25 May 1452 and 10 April 1454, describing and protesting against these actions, for which he held Henry responsible. But with the accession of Henry IV in the following year, relations between the two powers became more friendly, and the latter actually granted the Canaries to D. Martinho de Ataide, a Portuguese nobleman who had brought to Castile his wife Joanna, daughter of King Duarte. In this very year the islands were visited and described by Cadamosto, as we shall see later. Subsequently, as a result of sales, they passed to the Infant Fernando, brother of Afonso V, who sent D. Diogo da Silva to occupy them, but a Castilian knight, D. Fernan Peraza, put in a prior claim as son-in-law of Guillen de las Casas; and as the transaction had been confirmed by the King of Castile and for other reasons, the Infant desisted from the rights he had acquired. During the war of

succession with Castile a Portuguese fleet in 1477 landed on Grand Canary a force which was massacred by the Castilians, and the long struggle for dominion and the monopoly of trade in those parts of the world was finally settled in 1479 by the treaties of Alcaçovas and Toledo, which allotted the Canaries to Castile, and North-West Africa, Guinea and the islands in the ocean to the south to Portugal. The Castilians were then free to pursue their conquest of such of the Canaries as still remained under native rulers and had resisted foreign attacks on their independence; Grand Canary was already in their hands, and in 1490 they conquered Palma and in 1493 Teneriffe.

The Archipelago of the Azores owes its present name to the quantity of hawks which were found there, but it was also for centuries known as the Flemish Islands. St. Michael, the nearest to Europe, is distant some 800 miles from the coast of Portugal, and how men with their small boats reached and returned from them is an unsolved problem; that they did so is a proof of wonderful courage and skill in navigation. The Central and Eastern groups appear, though out of their right position, in the Laurentian Portolan of 1351 and the Catalan map of 1375 by Gabriel Valsecca. In the former they are designated thus: the islands of St. Mary and St. Michael as *Insule de Cabrera*, the islands of St. George, Fayal and Pico as *Insule de Ventura sive de Columbus* and Terceira is called *Insule de Brazil*, from the red dyewood found there, which also gave its present name to the South American country, first called Land of the Holy Cross. The delineation of the Azores on these maps constitutes, in the opinion of Major, a proof that they were discovered by Portuguese

vessels under Genoese pilots at the beginning of the fourteenth century, but the deduction cannot be regarded as more than a hypothesis,¹ which the Portuguese themselves are now abandoning² in favour of another that a caravel sighted them by chance on the return from one of the attempts to double Cape Bojador. The easiest way for sailing ships to return from West Africa to Portugal was to take advantage of the trade wind which carried them round in the direction of the Azores.

A few writers, including M. de la Roncière, have suggested that the expedition of 1341 reached the Azores, on the ground that the descriptions of some of the islands contained in Boccaccio's account apply to them rather than to the Canaries; but the great distance between the two groups renders it unlikely. Neither Zurara nor any of the early historians give information about the discovery, and it could not be expected from Zurara, because he did not attempt to describe voyages previous to those due to the initiative of Prince Henry. In any case, priority in discovery is difficult to establish and it has small importance; colonisation is the essential thing, and, as in the case of Madeira, incidental evidence shews that none took place before Henry's time.

The earliest date actually recorded for the Portuguese re-discovery is found in the Catalan map of 1439 by Gabriel Valsecca, which bears the legend, 'these islands were found by Diogo de Sevil pilot of the King of Portugal in the year mccccxxvii'; some read the year as 1427 and others as 1432, and think that Sevil accom-

¹ Jules Mees, *Les Açores d'après les Portulans* in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*, vol. xvii, p. 455, a careful cartographical study.

² Pedro de Azevedo, *As ilhas perdidas* in *Arquivo historico portuguez*, vol. II, p. 54.

panied the expedition of Gonçalo Velho Cabral now to be mentioned.¹

According to Father Antonio Cordeiro,² a native of Terceira, the discovery or re-discovery took place in 1431, when Henry ordered Gonçalo Velho, commander of Almourol in the Order of Christ, to sail westward in search of islands which he believed must exist there; Cabral only found the Formigas rocks, and as they were unsuitable for colonisation and enveloped in boiling surge, he returned. In the following year Henry sent him out again, and on 15 August, the Feast of the Assumption, he fell in with an island which he named St. Mary; and afterwards the Infant caused cattle to be placed there and gave Cabral the captaincy. Some years later, a slave, who had escaped from his owner to the hills, caught sight of a much larger island and went back to his master to announce the fact, in the hope of obtaining pardon. Henry was informed, and on consulting maps in his possession, he saw the island marked on them, and he commissioned Gonçalo Velho to go out once more, with the result that in 1444 he reached St. Michael. One of the maps has been supposed to be that which Henry's brother Pedro obtained in Venice during his travels. Some unknown mariners sighted the third island (hence its name of Terceira) by chance between 1445 and 1450, on a day dedicated to our Lord, and it received at first the designation of the Island of Jesus Christ and had for arms the crucifix.

The details of Cordeiro's narrative must be received with caution, because, though a native of the islands, he wrote long after the events he describes; he was born

¹ Jules Mees prefers the date 1437, *Histoire de la découverte des îles Açores* (Ghent, 1901), p. 71.

² *Historia Insulana*, bk. iv, cap. 1.

as late as 1641, and Father Gaspar Fructuoso, from whom he copied extensively, only in 1522. Diogo Gomes, Henry's servant, tells a different story. Wishing to know the distant regions of the Western ocean, if perchance there were islands or *terra firma* beyond those in the accounts of Ptolemy, the Infant sent out caravels, in a year not specified, to seek them. About 300 leagues west of Finisterre they found five islands, afterwards known as St. Mary, St. Michael, Terceira, Fayal and Pico, and returned with the news to Henry, who then despatched Gonçalo Velho to put pigs, cows and sheep on each of them, and Velho lived in St. Mary for some years. If Gomes is rightly reported by Valentin Fernandes, who wrote down his narrative, all five islands were found in one voyage, though he did not know by whom, which is improbable, and Velho played a subordinate part. Amid such varying relations it seems hopeless to arrive at the truth, and we can only be sure of one fact, that seven of the islands had been discovered before 1439, because by charter of 2 July of that year Afonso V gave Henry leave to settle them, and it is therein declared that he had already landed sheep there.¹

The remaining islands, those of the Western group, Corvo and Flores, also marked on the old maps, were re-found subsequently; the Portuguese gave new names to seven of the nine islands, but in the case of Corvo and St. George they adopted those of the Catalans.

The date when colonisation actually began is not found in Gomes, but Zurara, who should have known better than anyone, fixes it as late as 1445. According to him, Henry sent out Gonçalo Velho in that year to people two islands situated at 170 leagues from Madeira.

¹ *Alguns Documentos*, p. 6.

The Infant Pedro began to colonise the island of St. Michael, but his death followed, and it was left to Henry to carry on the work; strangely enough, this is all that the *Chronicle of Guinea* tells us about the subject.¹ In 1450 Henry gave the captaincy of Terceira to a Flemish servant of his, Jacques de Bruges, who had come to him and said that it was lying waste and had asked leave to colonise it. He had probably been recommended by the Prince's sister the Duchess of Burgundy, and being a rich man, he was ready to undertake the cost of the venture, so that his request was readily granted.

His example had followers, and the other four islands of the central group, none of them far from Terceira, were soon colonised. Vasco Gil Sodr  led his family and servants to Graciosa; Willem van der Haegen, a rich Fleming, at his own expense, took out a large body of settlers to St. George; and Josse de Hurtere, another Fleming, obtained the captaincy of Fayal and subsequently of Pico also. These donations account for the title of 'Flemish islands'.

The remote islands of Corvo and Flores were naturally the last to be re-discovered, but in 1453 the Duke of Braganza received a grant of the first, while the second was conceded to a Lisbon lady, D. Maria de Vilhena. The date of their settlement has not been handed down.

The Azores are in the latitude of Lisbon and New York, and when the Portuguese reached Corvo they were well on the way to North America. Old histories relate that they found there a statue of a man on horse-back pointing with his right hand to the West, and that a rock beneath it bore an inscription in an unknown

¹ Cap. 83.

language. The last detail is evidently an addition to the legend, the only foundation for which appears to be that a promontory running far into the sea presents something like the form of a man with his hand stretched out towards the West; though one writer has connected it with the stone idol brought back from the Canaries in 1341. Only a century ago the unlettered inhabitants of Corvo are said to have believed and asserted that the shape of the promontory was designed by Providence to indicate the existence of a New World, and that Columbus understood and acted on the suggestion; the discovery of America was therefore due to their island!¹

¹ Major, *The Life of Prince Henry of Portugal*, p. 245.

CHAPTER IV

FROM BOJADOR TO CAPE VERDE

FROM 1421, if not earlier, Henry despatched ships every year to explore the coast of West Africa beyond Cape Non, of which it was said, 'he who passes Cape Non will return or not', indicating that they held it to be the limit of possible navigation. These expeditions were not led by ordinary men, but by picked retainers of his who had achieved distinction in some field of action. Nevertheless Cape Bojador,¹ the bulging Cape, proved an impassable barrier, and the mariners, who coasted by day and anchored at night,² contented themselves with raiding the coast of Barbary and the kingdom of Granada for booty to pay their expenses. None of them added to knowledge, as the Prince wished. We can well believe, as Zurara declares, that their failure was not due to cowardice or lack of good-will. Their past records and the devotion which Henry inspired in his servitors would render it unlikely; but one and all felt that terror of the Sea of Darkness which had been spread by the Arab geographers, and of the torrid zone, to which if white men penetrated, they would become black. Why, they are reported to have said to themselves, should we attempt to pass the limits of navigation which our fathers set up, and what profit

¹ A letter of Afonso V, of 22 October 1443, states that Henry sent out ships quite fourteen times until he got news of the land beyond the Cape, and that he had a chart of it made (*Alguns Documentos*, p. 8).

² According to Cadamosto.

can result to the Infant by the loss of our souls and bodies, for by going farther we shall become wilful murderers of ourselves? Even apart from the dangers to be encountered, they were convinced that neither military honour nor commercial profit was to be gained by the experiment, because they knew from report that the sandy, uninhabited waste of the Sahara lay beyond; that the sea off the Cape was so shallow that, even a league from land, it was only a fathom deep; and that even if a ship passed it, the currents would not allow it to return. Some doubt has been cast in modern times on these obstacles, which are recorded by Zurara, but Duarte Pacheco, writing in 1505, confirms their existence. He declares that the Cape is so low and sandy as to be hardly visible at a short distance, and that it is very dangerous because of a reef that stretches out for over four or five leagues, on which some ships had been lost through carelessness. He mentions the lack of depth and the currents, and advises mariners to keep seven leagues off the land.¹

Notwithstanding the disappointment and useless expense which repeated failures had caused him, Henry did not upbraid his captains, but listened graciously to the story of their voyages, and even rewarded them, as he was wont to do with those who served him well, while he encouraged them to further efforts by the promise of greater gifts if they succeeded. Finally in 1433 he sent out one of his squires, Gil Eannes, in a *barca*, in the hope that he would do better; but overcome by the same fear this man got no farther than the Canaries. In the following year, still undaunted, Henry charged him to make one more attempt and strain every effort to pass the Cape, even if he did nothing else. The

¹ *Esmeraldo*, cap. 22.

Prince animated him with the hope of reward and chid him for his belief in hypothetical dangers. 'Even if these things that are reported had any authority, however small, I would not blame you, but you tell me only the opinions of four mariners who come from the Flanders trade, or from some other ports that are very commonly sailed to, and who know nothing of the needle or sailing chart.'¹

This mild admonishment, and the reverence the master inspired, put the squire on his mettle, and Henry experienced the truth of the saying that everything comes to him who knows how to wait; for Gil Eannes doubled the Cape and, though he found neither people nor signs of habitation, he brought back some plants called in Portugal St. Mary's roses, as tokens of the land he had visited. Though the feat seems to us a small one, it has been described by an old historian ² as equal to one of the labours of Hercules, and by a modern writer as greater than the doubling of the Cape of Good Hope, because it destroyed the fixed belief of mariners that the ocean beyond Bojador was unnavigable. That Henry realised the importance of the event is shewn by his prompt resolve to follow it up, for Gil Eannes had hardly finished the recital of the voyage when he ordered a *barinel* to be got ready for Afonso Gonçalves Baldaya, his cupbearer, and sent Gil Eannes out again in his company.³ The way was now clear, and the two men passed fifty leagues⁴ beyond the Cape to a little bay they named Angra dos Ruivos. They found the shores bereft of dwellings, but saw footmarks of men

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. 9.

² Barros. He dates the passage of the Cape in 1433, and says that to mark his satisfaction at the exploit King Duarte made the grant of Madeira to Henry.

³ In 1434, according to Barros.

⁴ Barros says thirty.

and camels. When they returned with this information, Henry felt that the inhabited region could not be far off, or else that traders from the interior must have passed that way to some seaport; and he decided that Baldaya should go out again to try to secure an interpreter from among those people to give news of the country. The latter therefore left Portugal in 1436,¹ and, going seventy leagues farther on and 120 beyond Bojador, found an arm of the sea which he took to be a river; it ran eight leagues into the land, and there he anchored. He had brought two horses with him, and on them he mounted two noble youths of seventeen years of age, named Hector Homen and Diogo Lopes d'Almeida, and ordered them to go up-country and look for villages or travellers. To spare them and their horses fatigue, he gave them no arms but lances and swords, for if they were in risk of capture, their best remedy would be their horses' feet. The youths followed the course of the water for seven leagues and came upon a band of nineteen men, armed with assegais, whom they promptly attacked. Notwithstanding the disparity of numbers, the natives would not meet them on the level ground, but retired to some rocks, where the combat continued. One of the youths here received a wound in the foot, but they both kept on fighting until the sun began to set, and then returned to their ship, which they reached about dawn. Early next day Baldaya and some of his men went off in a boat and rowed to the place where the fight had taken place, sending the two young men on horseback along the bank; but the natives had departed, leaving behind them their poor belongings, which Baldaya took on board and went back to his ship. Near the entrance to the supposed river

¹ In 1435, according to Barros.

he found a large number of sea wolves, and after killing as many as he could and loading the vessel with their skins, he named the bay Angra dos Cavallos and sailed fifty leagues farther south past the Rio do Ouro,¹ in the hope of taking some captives. He came to a point with a large rock which looked like a ship and called it the Port of the Galley. It was but a little short of Cape Branco. There he landed and found nothing but some nets, which were sufficiently strange to be described by Zurara in his chronicle; the thread came from the bark of a tree and was so suitable for its purpose that, without any tanning or admixture of flax, it could be woven into nets, or any kind of cordage. After this Baldaya went back to Portugal without the captives he had sought, or any certain knowledge as to whether the natives he had met with were Moors or heathens, or as to what their manner of life was.

No progress was made in discovery during the next four years, that is between 1435 and 1441, because more pressing affairs occupied Henry's attention. In 1437 occurred his expedition to Tangier, and in 1438 the death of his brother King Duarte, which was followed by great discords in the kingdom, so that, in the expressive phrase of Zurara, he clean forgot all other matters and for the time sent no more ships to that land. It is true that two vessels sailed to those parts, but one met with bad weather and turned back, while the other only went to the Rio do Ouro to load the skins and oil of sea wolves, and in 1440 we hear of two caravels being equipped for the same destination, but as they met with contrary fortune, Zurara does no more than mention their voyage. All these were private

¹ This is not a river, as was then supposed; it probably derived its name from the gold regions of the interior.

ventures, and probably all of them had merely commercial ends in view.

After his brothers had gained their spurs at Ceuta, Fernando, nourished in the same martial spirit, wished to imitate them and chafed at finding no opportunity at home. He asked leave of the King to go abroad for the purpose, and when Duarte refused, Henry is said to have suggested a renewal of the crusade by an attack on Tangier.

The King had long nourished the design in secret, and in January 1436 he sent his ambassadors to Pope Eugenius IV and to the Council of Basel to deal with questions in dispute with Castile relating to episcopal jurisdiction on the frontiers and the military Orders, and they obtained from the Pope a bull for a Crusade. In April the Cortes were summoned and granted a subsidy for the expedition. It was doubtless intended to anticipate Castile, which claimed the conquest of North Africa, and Duarte hoped that it might be possible to capture Arzila and Alcacer as well as Tangier, and by acquiring a large tract of territory in their neighbourhood to augment Portuguese trade. His brother Pedro and some of the nobles opposed the scheme, on the ground that Ceuta had proved a heavy burden in men and money to maintain, and that the small population of Portugal would be better employed at home in developing uncultivated lands; but the policy of overseas expansion prevailed.

On 22 August 1437 Henry and Fernando left Lisbon with part of the fleet, and on the 27th they reached Ceuta, where they found the remainder, which had been equipped at Oporto by the Count of Arraiolos. When Henry reviewed the forces, he found only 10,500 men, instead of the 15,000 it had been decided to send.

Desertions, the unpopularity of the undertaking and the fear of disaster are said to have accounted for the difference, though this is disputed.¹ It is also alleged that many preferred to incur the penalty of refusal and lose their goods rather than embark, and that even those who got as far as Ceuta shewed discontent, probably because they realised the deficiency in personnel. They made their voices heard in a council held in the town, but Henry would not listen and overrode all opposition; the fewer the men, the greater the glory, and God would provide in a cause which was His. It was not until September 9 that the army started by land, and on the 13th it established itself before Tangier. The delay at Ceuta had given the Moors time to concentrate their forces, and Henry disobeyed the strict injunctions of the King and the rules of prudence by providing no communication with the sea, from which he could have received reinforcements and secured a safe retreat. Though his small army fought bravely, successive attacks on the walls were either indecisive or disastrous, and meanwhile the numbers of the enemy increased daily. Early in October he recognised the mistake he had made in choice of position. His men were too few to resist the pressure of superior numbers; from besiegers they had become the besieged, and worst of all, the food supply now only sufficed for two days and the munitions had given out. The Moors knew this through deserters and offered to let the Portuguese re-embark on conditions. Ceuta, the Moorish captives in Portugal and the camp, with its artillery, arms and horses, were to be surrendered. During the progress of the negotia-

¹ It is possible that the remaining troops were kept at home in view of the tense relations with Castile, and for the same reason the King and Pedro did not accompany the expedition. The Castilians were even claiming Ceuta from Portugal.

tions the Christians suffered cruel privations. They had only horse-flesh to eat, and for lack of water to drink were forced to moisten their mouths with mud. On the 16th they agreed to terms; they were to go on board only with the clothes they wore, leaving behind them all that the camp contained, and Henry swore on behalf of the King to hand back Ceuta and make a peace of 100 years with the Moors. Here he exceeded his powers, for it was doubtful whether Duarte could cede the town without the sanction of the people given in Cortes. One of the Infants was to remain as hostage, and Henry offered to be the man, but was prevented by his followers, and the lot fell on Fernando. The governor of Tangier handed over his son as security for the free departure of the Portuguese, but they were attacked as they embarked; nevertheless they reached their ships with only the loss of their tents and artillery.¹

The Moors took Fernando to Fez, loading him with insults on the way, and when he arrived there, they made him work like a slave by day and kept him in a dark dungeon by night. His martyrdom lasted eleven years. His sufferings in many ways reproduced those of his Saviour, and he is known to history as the Constant Prince, and better still as the Holy Infant. The account of his imprisonment and death, written by his chaplain, is one of the gems of Portuguese literature. Ceuta was never restored, and when a Moor asked Henry the reason, he replied, 'It belongs to God'; the surrender to the infidel of a Christian town with consecrated churches was repugnant to most men, though advocated by a few. Henry passed five months at Ceuta in vain endeavours

¹ The history of the expedition has been put in a new light by Dr. Domingos Mauricio in a series of articles in *Broteria*, January to September 1931. Professor David Lopes has a chapter on the subject in vol. iii of the new illustrated History of Portugal.

to ransom his brother and then returned to the Algarve, overwhelmed with grief and loth to meet the King; but when the latter fell ill at Thomar in September of the following year he hastened to his side. Though the Portuguese only lost 500 men at Tangier, the odds against them were such that the defeat would, but for their valour, have been a disaster. Some of the survivors went to the King in sad-coloured garments and exaggerated their sufferings to gain favours, but the Count of Avranches acted like a true knight. Dressed in his gayest attire and newly shaved, he approached the sovereign with a joyful face and told him that he should not grieve at the captivity of Fernando, who was one man only, but have the bells rung for rejoicing over those who had escaped.

Under Duarte's will Queen Leonor became guardian of their children and regent during the minority of the eldest son Afonso V. She was on bad terms with Pedro, while he did not hide his dislike of the provisions of his brother's will, and aspired to the regency. Dissensions broke out, culminating in civil war. Pedro was made regent in 1440 and the Queen retired to Spain and there died. Finally, after Afonso V had assumed the government of the realm, Pedro rebelled and was killed at the battle of Alfarrobeira in 1449.

The appointment of Pedro as regent postponed the danger of civil war for a time, and the temporary lull in the struggle for control of the government enabled Henry to take up the work of discovery afresh. In 1441 Zurara is able to record a novelty in Henry's 'toilsome seedtime of preparation', no less than the capture of the first natives by Antão Gonçalves, his chamberlain and a very young man. Henry sent him out to the Rio do Ouro to take in a cargo of skins and oil,

and though he gave him the same orders as to all the others, that is, to go farther on into the unknown, he expected little from a youth without experience; but Gonçalves was a man of spirit, ill-content to bring home nothing but 'petty merchandise'. Therefore when he had loaded his vessel as ordered, he called together the ship's company, twenty-one in all, and, taking them into his counsel as friends and brothers, suggested that they should try to find some people along the river, for it would be a fine thing if they were lucky enough to bring the first captives into the Infant's presence; he would be not a little content to get knowledge about the inhabitants of the land, and their own reward would be in proportion to the expense and labour they had undertaken only for that end. The members of the crew, who all belonged to Henry's household, were very willing to try to do their master such a service, and, choosing nine of them, Gonçalves landed at night, and after marching a league inland they found a path and followed it up for three leagues until they came upon the footprints of some forty or fifty persons. These led in the opposite direction, however, and as the heat was intense and they had no water and their leader saw they were tired out, he called on them to turn back and follow the trail. They did so, and came upon a naked man driving a camel and carrying two assegais, and forgetting their fatigue they pursued him. Though he was one against nine, the native defended himself stoutly until he received a javelin thrust, and then he threw down his arms like a beaten thing and was taken. Farther on they saw, upon the top of a hill, the people whose tracks they were following, but it was then too late in the day to try to reach them. However, on the way back to the ship they came upon a blackamoor woman, a slave of those

on the hill; some wished to let her alone for fear of inviting an attack from her owners, who were double their number, but Gonçalves bade them seize her and was promptly obeyed. The men on the hill had a mind to rescue her, but when they saw the Portuguese ready to receive them they turned their backs and went off. So the first two captives were taken.

On returning to his ship, Gonçalves found to his surprise and joy another young servitor of the Infant named Nuno Tristão, who had been sent out in an armed caravel with special instructions to sail as far as possible beyond the Port of the Galley and make some captures. He had brought with him one of Henry's Moorish slaves, and this man was ordered to try to get information from the natives already taken, but they did not understand him. Although Tristão was anxious to go on his way, the spirit of emulation led him to propose to Gonçalves to join in an attempt to secure further captives, 'for besides the knowledge which the Lord Infant will gain by means of them, profit will also accrue to him by their service and ransom'. Each of them was to take ten picked men and go in pursuit of the band Gonçalves had met with. The latter objected that the men would not be easy to find and would probably have warned their friends, 'so that when we think to capture them, we may ourselves become their booty', but two bold squires, Gonçalo de Sintra and Diogo Annes de Valladares, persuaded the council of captains and men to accept the proposal. Landing at night, the explorers discovered two camps of natives, and dividing themselves into three parties, fell upon them with loud cries of 'Portugal' and 'Santiago', killed three and took ten prisoners, among the latter one Adahu, who was said to be a noble, 'and he showed in his countenance right

well that he had pre-eminence over the others'. When the affair was over, all begged Gonçalves to consent to be made a knight, but he said that it was not right that for so small a service he should receive so great an honour, and one his age did not warrant, but he was finally persuaded to accept it at the hands of Tristão, and for this reason the place took the name of the Port of the Cavalier.

When the party got back to their ships, the Moor was set to question the captives, again without result, 'because the language of these people was not Moorish but Azeneguey of Sahara'. But Adahu had travelled and learnt the Moorish tongue and answered to whatever was asked of him. Next, to make trial of the people of the land and acquire further knowledge, the Moor and one of the women captives were put on shore to invite the natives to ransom some of the prisoners and to trade, and two days later a hundred and fifty Moors on foot and thirty-five mounted on horses and camels appeared. Though they seemed to be both 'barbarous and bestial', they did not lack astuteness, for only three appeared on the shore, while the rest lay in ambush to seize the Portuguese when they landed. The latter were equally cautious and turned back their boat on seeing that the Moor did not appear, whereupon the natives rushed down to the shore, throwing stones, making gestures of defiance, and pointing to the Moor whom they had taken prisoner, and he called out to the Portuguese to be on their guard.

After dividing up the captives, Gonçalves returned home, while Tristão careened and repaired his vessel, keeping his tides as if he were in the Tagus, an act of boldness which caused much wonderment, and then went on to Cape Branco, but being unable to make any

captures there he sailed for Portugal. Henry rewarded the two captains liberally,¹ being especially pleased by the information he obtained from Adahu, and by the prospect that he would be able to reduce these natives to the Christian faith. Realising that he would often be sending ships to those parts and that his men would have to fight with the infidels, he then determined to send Fernando Lopes de Almeida, a knight of the Order of Christ, to the Pope to ask him for some of the treasures of Holy Church for the salvation of the souls of those who should there meet their end. Eugenius IV, who was then in Florence, issued a bull of 5 January 1443 conceding the plenary indulgence asked for, while by a letter of 22 October Pedro, as Regent, granted Henry the fifth and tenth of the profits which belonged to the King, on account of the great expenses he had incurred in the discoveries, as well as the privilege that no one should go to the parts beyond Cape Bojador without his licence.

The chief Adahu often asked Antão Gonçalves to take him back to his country, where he declared he could give five or six blackamoors in exchange for himself and a like ransom would be provided for two of the other captives, who were young men. Gonçalves had an eye to the profit, but he knew that other considerations would move Henry more to grant the necessary leave, so he represented that the least he could get for the three Moors would be ten, and it would be better to save the souls of ten than three, for though they were black, yet they had souls like the others. Moreover, they were heathen and not Moslems, and so easier to bring into the path of salvation, and these blacks would be able to give news of more distant countries. As he

¹ He made Gonçalves his private secretary.

foresaw, Henry accepted the proposal, 'for he not only wished to have knowledge of that land, but also of the Indies and the land of Prester John, if he could'. Gonçalves started on his voyage, but a storm drove him back to Lisbon. With him was a gentleman of the household of the Emperor Frederick III¹ who had come to Portugal to receive knighthood at Ceuta, and as he had a curiosity to see new lands, and everyone then spoke of the discovery of Guinea, and those who took part in it were esteemed as highly as knights, he obtained Henry's leave to accompany Gonçalves, for he wanted to experience a great storm at sea so as to be able to talk about it at home. He had his wish, for the tempest was such that they barely escaped destruction. However, they started out again, and on reaching the land from which Adahu had come Gonçalves put the chief on shore, clad in garments given him by the Infant, trusting to his pride of race that he would provide his ransom at a given spot, and hoping he would bring his people to traffic there. But as soon as he regained his liberty, he forgot all about his promise.

Gonçalves then entered the Rio do Ouro to deal with the ransom of the two youths, and after a week of waiting, on the eighth day a Moor on a white camel arrived with a companion and announced that men would come for the purpose. On the following day as many as 100 individuals, male and female, were brought for selection, and of these Gonçalves took ten, the negotiations being managed by one Martin Fernandes, Henry's official ransomer. He also got a little gold dust, the first brought by the Portuguese from Guinea, a shield of ox-hide, and a number of ostrich eggs, so that one day three dishes

¹ In 1451 the Emperor married Leonor, Henry's niece.

of them were served at Henry's repast, 'as fresh as if they had been eggs of a domestic fowl'. We may well presume, observes the chronicler, that no other Christian prince had dishes like these at his table, but Henry must have been even more pleased with the news that there were merchants in those parts who traded in the gold that was found there, the same whose caravans he had heard of at Ceuta. This Sahara commerce, hitherto the monopoly of Moslems, was soon to be tapped by the Portuguese.

Seeing the results of these voyages, more men began to undertake them, some to serve the Prince, others to gain honour or profit; and in 1443 Nuno Tristão went out again by Henry's orders. Passing Cape Branco, he reached an island, afterwards known as Arguim. There he saw twenty-five canoes, the naked crews of which sat astride them with their legs in the water, as if they had been oars, to help them in rowing. At a distance the Portuguese thought they were birds, though they were larger, for other greater marvels were said to exist in those parts, but on perceiving them to be men, joy filled their hearts and they pursued them. On account of the smallness of their craft they could not make a large booty, for after hauling in fourteen the boat was full. Going on to the island they caught fifteen more, and on another island found a quantity of herons who bred there.¹ So Tristão returned home, more pleased with the booty than on the former occasion because it was greater and had been won farther off, and also because he had no companion with whom to share it. The bay of Arguim became a centre of trade with the negro states of the interior and the site of the first

¹ Hence the Portuguese called it Heron Island. This and another small island and the much larger one of Arguim are all in the bay of that name.

European settlement on the Guinea coast; and there Henry began the construction of a fort in 1448.¹

When he began to colonise Madeira and other islands, men murmured against him as if he were spending their money on the work and declared that it could have no result, but when the fruits began to appear they changed their opinion and praised what they had decried. The same happened with the voyages to Guinea. When the first and second cargoes of captives were brought home, the grumblers wavered in their former opinion, and the return of Tristram with the third consignment, which had been captured in so short a time and with so little trouble, entirely reversed their attitude. Indeed, going to the opposite extreme, they proclaimed Henry to be a 'second Alexander'. When they saw the houses of others full of slaves, and their property increasing, covetousness began to work in them, and many asked leave to go to the coast from which the captives came. The first to do so were the men of Lagos, because, after the Tangier campaign, the Infant usually lived in that neighbourhood in order to supervise the town he was building,² and his captains unloaded their vessels with booty in that town.

Among the inhabitants of Lagos was Lançarote, who had been brought up in Henry's household and was

¹ The fort was captured by the Dutch in the seventeenth century and afterwards passed from one power to another; its history will be found in Astley's *Voyages*, vol. II, p. 57, with an engraving of the building. Some remains of the original Portuguese construction may still be seen, but the place has long been abandoned to its former desolation. So little frequented is the coast to the south down to the Cape of Ransome, the Portuguese name, now Mirik, that no proper survey exists. Arguim and its neighbourhood are described by Gruvel and Chudeau, *A travers la Mauritanie Occidentale* (Paris, 1909), with illustrations, and by Vidal, *Bulletin du Comité d'études historiques et scientifiques*, No. 2, July-October 1922, p. 115.

² Barros says that Henry was then actually living in his new town called Terçanabal.

popular, although he held the post of chief Revenue officer! This man proposed an expedition to his friends, and when they had equipped six caravels he asked Henry for licence to sail, which the latter gladly granted and ordered banners to be made with the Cross of the Order of Christ on them, one of which was to be flown on each caravel. In 1444 the expedition proceeded to the islands in the Bay of Arguim and to that of Tider and those adjacent, and after various adventures captured 235 natives, some of whom put up a good defence. It was nothing more than a series of successful raids, which gained the leader his knight-hood. No attempt was made at exploration, but the attack on the island of Tider is justified by Gil Eannes, the hero of the rounding of Cape Bojador, in a way that fits in with one of Henry's objects as stated by Zurara. In urging on his men he said: 'Though we do no more than find out how many people there are, it will profit us, for the Infant will be able, knowing its power, to send a fleet fit to cope with it and crews to match, who will be able to fight with the Moors and conquer it'.¹

When the ships returned to Lagos, the best of the captives was sent as an offering to the Church, and a boy to St. Vincent on the Cape of that name where he became a Franciscan friar and ever after lived as a Catholic Christian. The division of the rest is described by Zurara, who, notwithstanding occasional displays of pedantry, could write simply and graphically when he liked, and had a kindly heart.

'On the next day, which was the 8th of the month of August, very early in the morning, by reason of the heat, the seamen began to make ready their boats, and

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. 22.

to take out their captives and carry them on shore, as they were commanded. And these, placed altogether in that field, were a marvellous sight, for amongst them were some white enough, fair to look upon and well proportioned, others were less white like mulattoes; others again were as black as Ethiops, and so ugly, both in features and in body, as almost to appear the images of a lower hemisphere. But what heart could be so hard as not to be pierced with piteous feeling to see that company? For some kept their heads low and their faces bathed in tears, looking one upon another; others stood groaning very grievously, looking up to the height of heaven, fixing their eyes upon it, crying out loudly, as if asking help of the Father of Nature; others struck their faces with the palms of their hands, throwing themselves at full length upon the ground; others made their lamentations in the manner of a dirge, after the custom of their country. And though we could not understand the words of their language, the sound of it right well accorded with the measure of their sadness. But to increase their sufferings still more, there now arrived those who had charge of the division of the captives and who began to separate one from another in order to make an equal partition of the fifts; and then it was needful to part fathers from sons, husbands from wives, brothers from brothers. No respect was shewn either to friends or relations, but each fell where his lot took him.

‘And who could finish that partition without very great toil, for as often as they had placed them in one part, the sons, seeing their fathers in another, rose with great energy and rushed over to them; the mothers clasped their other children in their arms, and threw themselves flat on the ground with them, receiving

blows with little pity for their own flesh, if only they might not be torn from them.

'The Infant was there, mounted upon a powerful steed, and accompanied by his retinue, making distribution of his favours, as a man who sought to gain but small treasure from his share; for he made a very speedy partition of the forty-six souls that fell to him as his fifth. His chief riches lay in his purpose, and he reflected with great pleasure upon the salvation of those souls that before were lost. And certainly his expectation was not in vain, since, as we said before, as soon as they understood our language, they turned Christians with very little ado; and I who put together this history into the present volume, saw in the town of Lagos boys and girls (the children and grandchildren of those first captives) born in this land, as good and true Christians as if they had directly descended, from the beginning of the dispensation of Christ, from those who were first baptised.'¹

Zurara claims that the captives soon forgot the sorrow of separation from their own folk, became Christians and settled down cheerfully in a very mild type of servitude. He asserts that these negroes were obedient and kindly and of far superior nature to the Moors of the nearer parts of Africa.

Slave-raiding, however justified by conversions, was not among Henry's objects as we know them from his biographer. After the return of Lançarote's expedition the Prince sent out Gonçalo de Sintra with strict orders to go straight to Guinea and for no reason to fall short of it; but when he reached Cape Branco he suggested to his men that they should stop at Arguim and try and take some captives. He remembered the last haul and

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. 25.

thought he might do as well or better with little toil, and though his comrades reminded him of the orders, he, 'like a man whom death invited to make his end there', said the detention would be short and would not listen to protests. On two islands they caught only two individuals, both women; and then an Azenegue boy, who had come with them as interpreter, escaped and disclosed the Portuguese plans. But the natives would not credit him until they had sent a man to the ship who pretended to wish to go to Portugal. He was taken on board, but followed the example of the youth, and though the sailors pointed to these omens, Sintra persisted and went on to try his luck on the island of Naar, where he landed with twelve of his men. There they crossed a creek, and stayed so long that the tide rose and cut them off from their boat, and a body of Moors, 200 in number, who had been waiting for this chance, fell upon them and killed the captain and five others.¹

In the Bay of Arguim the action of Lançarote and his companions had thoroughly roused the natives, who almost certainly believed that the captives were destined to be eaten and not merely enslaved. Possibly the news of these doings had also reached the Rio do Ouro, for when three caravels, commanded by Antão Gonçalves and Diogo Afonso, Henry's servants, and Gomes Pires, master of the royal galley, went there shortly after to trade and convert, they could do nothing. But the expedition was not useless, because a squire named John Fernandes decided to stay among the barbarians, only to see the country and bring news of it to the Prince, while an old Moor with like curiosity went with the ships to Portugal.

¹ Barros places the event much farther north, at the Angra de Sintra, only fourteen leagues beyond the Rio do Ouro.

The next and most important voyage, perhaps made in the same year 1444, was another by Nuno Tristão, for he was the first man to see the land of the real negroes, a green country covered with palms and other beautiful trees; and though prevented from landing by the rough weather, he took back news that he had found the end of the desert and seen men on shore, men who appeared to be very willing to enter into relations with the Portuguese. The report roused emulation in Dinis Dias,¹ member of a well-known family of sailors and once a servant of John I, and though he was no longer young, he asked Henry for a caravel, with the resolve to do better than previous explorers; and he did, for he never lowered sail until he had passed the Senegal, which divided the land of the Azenegue Moors from that of the negroes of Guinea called Jaloffs. His ship, the first they had ever seen, was supposed to be a fish or a bird, and four of them got into a small boat made of a hollow tree-trunk to clear up the mystery, but when they saw men on deck they made haste to flee.

Farther south, near the Senegal, other boats appeared whose crews also took fright. The Portuguese captured four, and Zurara protests that they were the first to be taken by Christians in their own land, 'and there is no chronicle or history that relates aught to the contrary'. 'It was no small honour for our Prince whose mighty power was enough to command peoples so far from our land, making booty in the neighbourhood of Egypt.' The river Senegal was thought to be one of the branches of the Nile. As the object of Dias was rather discovery than captives, he pushed on to a great cape, to which for its green look he gave the name of Cape Verde—he had reached the western limits of the continent and

¹ Barros calls him Fernandes.

the coast now turned eastward—and after landing on the island of Bezeguiche, or Goree, he went home, and though he brought little booty, Henry thought it great, since it came from so far, and he gave Dias and his companions rich rewards.¹

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. 31.

CHAPTER V

VOYAGES FROM 1445 TO 1448

IN 1445¹ Antão Gonçalves received orders to fetch back John Fernandes from the Rio do Ouro, where he had left him seven months before, and with him went two other servants of the Prince, all in three caravels. They took in victuals at Madeira, 'because of the great supplies that were there', a practice which now became usual and testified to the good results of Henry's colonisation, and then they decided to go on to Cape Branco, and if separated by a storm, as actually happened, to meet there. Diogo Afonso, the first to arrive, caused a great wooden cross to be erected to advise his companions that he had passed on farther, and 'well might anyone of another country marvel who should chance to pass by that coast and see among the Moors such a symbol, if they did not know that our ships were sailing in that part of the world'.

When the caravels came together again, they raided Arguim island,² and a little farther south took John Fernandes on board, who told them of a 'noble', Ahude

¹ The dates of the voyages are uncertain; Zurara gives few and Barros does not always agree with them, and modern historians differ from both. This is a chronological table in the work of Snr Quirino de Fonseca, p. 104. Though Barros does not accept all Zurara's dates, he usually follows him closely in narrative, often using the same expressions.

² Though the coast and islands were so barren, they had a considerable population on account of the fisheries.

Meymom, in the vicinity who wished to trade. In exchange for some articles of small value, they received nine negroes and a little gold dust, and on the way home caught some more natives at Cape Branco, who were sold in Lisbon. The chief interest this voyage had for the Prince, and has for us, lies in the recovery of Fernandes and the story he was able to tell.

When he was first put on shore and left with the relatives of a native brought to Portugal by Antão Gonçalves, who were shepherds, the latter stripped him of his clothes and gave him a burnous and took him to their country, which was all sandy, both hill and plain, except for some oases where their sheep fed; the only trees were palms, the only water came from wells. During his wanderings Fernandes learnt about the interior of North-West Africa. The people were Arabs, Azenegues and Berbers, living in tents; their wealth consisted in their herds and in the negroes they captured and sold to Moors in exchange for bread and other things. They changed camp frequently, for the longest they could stay in any one spot was eight days. Milk was their chief food and that of their horses and dogs, but sometimes they ate a little meal and the seeds of wild herbs. When they could get wheat, they took it with the gusto the Portuguese showed for confetti. Those who lived by the sea sustained themselves on fish only, which they generally ate raw or dried. For clothing they had vests and breeches of skins, but the more honourable wore burnouses, and a few of higher rank were well clad and owned good horses, saddles and stirrups. The women covered their faces, but their bodies were quite naked, a proof, observes Zurara, of their great bestiality, 'for if they had some particle of reason, they would follow nature'. The wives of the

principal men, however, wore gold rings in their nostrils and ears, as well as other jewels.

The men with whom Fernandes travelled guided themselves by the stars and the winds, 'as is done at sea', and by observing the flight of birds, for regular paths did not exist. They took him at his request to the land of Ahude Meymom, enduring great thirst by the way, for their stock of water gave out and they passed three days without drinking. The chief, who was accompanied by his sons and others, numbering in all 150 persons, received him well and during his stay there Fernandes lived on milk only; but it suited him, and when the caravels picked him up, he was well nourished and had a good colour. As the heat and the dust of the sandy country were very great, those who had not horses travelled on camels, some of which were white and made fifty leagues a day. Fernandes found that negro slaves were common and that the men of rank had plenty of gold brought from the Guinea coast; he saw quantities of ostriches, deer, gazelles and partridges, and noted that the swallows which left Portugal in the summer wintered on those sands; other small birds went there also, but the storks passed over to hibernate in Negro-land.¹

The next expedition, organised by Gonçalo Pacheco,² High Treasurer of Ceuta, a wealthy man who 'always kept ships at sea against the enemies of the Kingdom', ended unfortunately. After successful raids at Arguim and Tider, the adventurers went on to Negro-land in emulation of Dinis Dias, but a tempest lasting three days drove them back nearly to Cape Branco, where they had made one of their previous hauls. There they

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, caps. 76, 77.

² He was father of Duarte Pacheco.

decided to try their luck again and put out their boats, but when fifty natives armed with lances appeared on the shore, some of the Portuguese advised caution, fearing that others might be lying in ambush. However, bolder spirits replied that if they were always to reason thus they would never do a single brave deed. 'All the men opposed to us are not enough to withstand ten of ours in a fight, for they are but a handful of Moorish knaves who have never learned to fight, except like beasts, and the first man to be wounded among them will frighten all the others', and, ironically, 'bold indeed would be the men who have their armed ships in the Strait of Ceuta and through all the Levant Sea, if they were to dread such a hostile gathering as this'.

The Portuguese forced their way on shore and followed the fleeing natives, capturing seven, and still not content with their booty they resolved to try and add to it on the islands between Capes Branco and Tira. Landing on one of them they scattered in search of their prey, but fell into an ambush and had to retreat to their boats; one of these stuck fast on the shore and could not be launched, and seven men who could not save themselves by swimming were killed. It was said that the natives ate those dead men, but though Zurara, with his usual fairness, records a denial of the report, he declares that the natives were accustomed to eat the livers of their captives and drink their blood in the case of those who had killed their near relations, counting it as a very great vengeance.¹

The disaster suffered by Gonçalo de Sintra and his death were not forgotten in Lagos, and in the same year of 1445 the governor, judges and corporation of the town, with Lançarote Pessanha at their head, went

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, caps. 36 to 48.

to Prince Henry and offered to undertake an expedition against the Moors of the island of Tider and break their power. To gain his consent, they put forward their crusading purpose and the prospect of booty, in which he would share. Henry welcomed the first, while as to the second he declared that he prized their good-will more than the hope of profit. He not only authorised the enterprise, but gave such assistance that it became a national one, for he caused the project to be published over the kingdom, with the result that the largest fleet which had ever sailed down the west coast of Africa was equipped.

The Lagos squadron consisted of fourteen caravels and carried many notable men, including Lançarote's father-in-law, Sueiro da Costa, *alcaide* of the town, a veteran soldier who had been in many sieges and battles, among them that of Agincourt; Alvaro de Freitas, a noble and Commander of Aljezur in the Order of Santiago, who had made great prizes from the Moors of Granada; and Gomes Pires, captain of the King's galley. Lisbon and Madeira supplied twelve vessels, among which were those of Dinis Dias, the discoverer of the land of the negroes; Alvaro Gonçalves de Ataíde, tutor to the King and, later on, Count of Atouguia; and Teixeira and Zarco, the two Captains of the island; while last but not least went the famous sea-rover Palenço. The list contains the names of the most daring and experienced mariners of Portugal. The Lagos caravels started on 10 August, and as some were better sailors than others and storms might hinder their progress, they agreed to meet at Cape Branco. The first to reach it was Lourenço Dias, who, going ahead to the Isle of Herons in Arguim Bay, fell in with one of the ships of Gonçalo Pacheco's expedition on its way home,

and presently the other two appeared. Dias was delighted at the sight, because he knew them to be Portuguese, for no vessels of that build or like it were to be found in those parts except what came from Portugal. He invited them to stay and take part in the attack on Tider, and after debating the matter in council, according to custom, they agreed; though they were short of provisions for the homeward voyage, it would be better to throw half their captives overboard than lose a chance of gaining honour and avenging their dead comrades. In the meantime nine of the Lagos caravels reached the cape and, after the captains had conferred with Lançarote, it was decided to go to Arguim and wait for the others before commencing operations. There they found Dias and the other three caravels and saluted them with a discharge of their bombards and culverins; they further shewed their joy by sounding their musical instruments and singing, after which they fell to eating and drinking, 'like men full of good confidence in victory'.

The next day, at an assembly held on shore, the plan of campaign was arranged. Two hundred and seventy-eight men were to land in three battles or divisions; the vanguard consisted of footmen and lancers under Alvaro de Freitas, the centre of crossbowmen and archers under Lançarote, and in the rear-guard went the men-at-arms led by Sueiro da Costa. They intended to disembark and attack before dawn, but the pilots mistook the direction in the dark, and the ships did not reach the island of Tider until the sun was high in the heavens, which led to murmuring against the Almighty for His disfavour and to a division of opinion as to their next movements. Taught by experience, the rank and file wished the landing to be deferred on the grounds that,

as no Moors appeared, they were probably numerous and lying hid in ambushes. But the captains pressed vehemently for an immediate onset.

The enthusiasm of the leaders, who preferred honour to profit, carried the men with them, and the host disembarked under the banner of the Crusade, which Lançarote entrusted to Gil Eannes, making him first take an oath that no fear or peril would make him give it up until he died. After all this preparation, we expect to hear of a pitched battle, but the issue was tame enough. After a march of three leagues over sand in the great heat, the Portuguese arrived at the place and saw a multitude of Moors drawn up in hostile array, and, sounding trumpets, they attacked and quickly routed the enemy, who took to flight, losing eight killed and four captured. This petty gain and a supply of drinking water were the spoils of victory and the phrase of Horace, '*parturiunt montes*', rises to the lips, but the event probably had an importance which the chronicler omits to mention; it prepared the way for the foundation of the fortress and trading settlement established a few years later on Arguim island. Without meaning it, for he is always in earnest, Zurara makes his readers smile by adding that many of the Christians were so tired that they could not return to the ships on foot and found a great help in their need in some asses, which were plentiful on the island, and on these they rode back; however, the cavaliers had reason for their fatigue, for they had been up all night and marching much of the day on loose sand under a burning sun, carrying their arms, and some perhaps armour as well. Zurara ends his account of the day's work by recording that Sueiro da Costa was asked to receive knighthood and agreed, if it were bestowed by Alvaro de Freitas;

he expresses his surprise, in which we join, that so distinguished a man should never have been willing to accept the honour until then.

After this event the three caravels left for home, but some of those which had failed to come before, now arrived and complained that they had not been in the invasion of the island. It was therefore resolved to make another attack on Tider. Landing there, they saw a body of Moors on the other side of a broad creek, who, feeling themselves secure, scoffed at the Christians, but three youths of Prince Henry's household plunged into the water and, followed by others, swam over and fell upon the enemy, dispersed them and captured fifty-seven.¹

The conquest of Tider having been accomplished, Lançarote resigned his command and left each of the captains to do as he pleased, according to Henry's instructions. The booty was divided and the small caravels started home as winter was approaching, but Gomes Pires resolved to go south to learn about the land of the negroes and the river Nile, and Alvaro de Freitas was bent on going farther, 'even to the Terrestrial Paradise'. Lançarote and three other captains agreed to join them, and in six caravels they sailed to the green land beyond the Sahara; there they found birds new to them, such as flamingos and hornbills; and some fishes as large as sharks, with mouths three palms long, and others of the size of mullets, having as it were crowns on their heads like gills through which they breathed. They coasted until they descried two palm-trees which Dinis Dias had first seen, and by them and by the scent of fruit which was wafted over the waves they knew they had reached Guinea and were close to the Senegal, for Henry had

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, caps. 49 to 58.

told them that some twenty leagues beyond those palms they would find it, for so he had learnt from Azenegue prisoners. And sure enough they presently noticed that the sea-water was mud-colour, and tasting it, they found it sweet, and soon they reached the estuary of the river and landed. They began by seizing a negro girl and boy, the latter of whom Henry caused to be taught to read and write 'with all other knowledge that a Christian should possess', intending to have him ordained a priest to preach to his countrymen. In a hut they found a shield made of the hide of an elephant and learnt that these animals were so large that the flesh of one would make a good meal for 2500 men. Farther on they heard the blows of an axe and saw a man cutting timber. One Stephen Afonso, a short and slender man, approached the negro from behind and, leaping on his back, held him by the hair, like a hound who has fixed on the ear of a mighty bull. While the two were struggling, Afonso's companions came up and seized the negro by the arms and neck, but as Afonso then let go, the native threw them off and escaped. The boy and girl were his children, and when he found they were missing from his hut he thrust an assegai into the face of the first Portuguese he met and would have been made prisoner if another native had not come to aid him.

From the Senegal the mariners went on to Cape Verde and watered at an island, where they saw the arms of the Infant carved upon the trees with the letters of his motto, a sign that other caravels had gone ahead of them, and in fact Zarco had preceded them. 'Of a surety I doubt', observes Zurara, 'if since the great power of Alexander and Caesar, there hath ever been any prince in the world that had the marks of his con-

quest set up so far from his own land'; he does not exaggerate, for the distance from Portugal was some 2000 miles. As the number of blacks was such that they dared not land, they placed on the shore a cake, a mirror and a sheet of paper on which a cross was traced, to shew their peaceful purpose; but when the natives found these articles they broke up the cake and shattered the mirror with their assegais and tore the paper, shewing that they cared for none of these things. On this Gomes Pires ordered his crossbowmen to let fly their bolts at those people, to advise that if they did not care to be friendly the Portuguese could do them hurt. The negroes replied by launching their assegais and a shower of poisoned arrows; and seeing that they could do nothing with such folk, the caravels turned back and sailed for Portugal. On the way, some of them raided and took captives in the island of Tider.¹

After the conquest of this island three of the caravels sailed off to Palma, one of the Canaries, accompanied by two chiefs from Gomera, who had been at Henry's court and did not forget his favours; and they took seventeen men and women, among the latter one of great size, said to be a queen. One of these caravels returned to Gomera and seized some of the friendly inhabitants and brought them home, at which the Prince was very wroth, and he had these Canarians conducted to his own house, nobly attired and sent back to their island.

Dinis Dias and Rodrigueannes de Travassos, who had separated from the fleet early in the voyage, also reached Cape Verde and had fierce combats with the inhabitants, in which most of their men were wounded, because neither harness nor coat of mail stayed the

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, caps. 59, 60, 63 to 65.

course of the native arrows, and the shield of one of the Prince's pages was so full of them that it looked like the back of a porcupine when he lifts his quills.

Zarco had equipped a caravel and given it to his nephew Alvaro Fernandes with strict orders not to join in slave-hunts, but to go straight to the land of the negroes and as far beyond as he could, and to try to bring some new thing to the Prince which would give him pleasure. The caravel was manned by a crew ready for any toil and its captain was both young and daring, so that they went sailing over the ocean sea to the Senegal, where they took in two pipes of water, one of which they afterwards carried back to Lisbon, and 'perhaps not even Alexander drank of water that had been brought from so far'. Thence they passed on to Cape Verde, and anchored there to see if canoes would come off to them. Two boats holding ten Guinea men presently approached, and five of the natives went on board and were provided with food and drink. They had come to spy, and on returning to shore reported that it would be easy to capture the ship; with this purpose thirty-five of them put out in six boats, but waited a little distance off, not daring to attack. Seeing this, Fernandes had a boat with eight men lowered on the farther side of the caravel where it could not be seen, and when one of the canoes outdistanced the others, the Portuguese boat rowed round and made for the natives, but they threw themselves into the water and proved hard to catch, because they dived like cormorants. From there Fernandes went on to a cape where there were many bare palm-trees and named it the Cape of Masts, and then turned back; and this was the caravel that went farther than all the others in 1445.

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. 75

If the large fleet accomplished nothing in the way of discovery, apart from the enterprise of Alvaro Fernandes, the next attempt, that of Nuno Tristão in 1446, ended in disaster. He was one of the first and most valiant of the explorers and knew Henry's ambitions, because he had been brought up from early youth in his household, so that now, seeing how the Prince was toiling to send his ships even beyond the land of the negroes, and that some had passed the river of Nile,¹ he thought he would not deserve his good name if he were not to be of the company. Equipping a caravel, he went straight to Guinea and passed sixty leagues beyond Cape Verde to the Rio Grande,² where he thought there ought to be some inhabited place, and launching two boats with twenty-two men, he rowed up the stream, where he descried houses. Before he reached the shore, twelve boats carrying seventy or eighty natives appeared, and while one of them landed its men, who began to shoot their arrows, those in the remaining boats attacked the Portuguese on the other side and pursued them until they reached the caravel, wounding all.³ The arrows carried such a virulent poison that four men died before they could get on board, and the rest could not haul in the boats and were obliged to cut their cables and make sail. Of the twenty-two who started from the ship, only two survived, and two of the crew were wounded as they tried to raise the anchors; and all lay ill for quite twenty days, so that only five, nearly all boys, remained. Among them was a sailor lad who said he could set the course if directed by another, and a youth, Aires Tinoco, from the inland town of

¹ The Senegal.

² The Geba.

³ Some assert, says Barros, that this affair took place in the Nuno river, twenty leagues beyond the Rio Grande, hence its name.

Olivença, 'guided by Divine grace', made himself the pilot and bade the others steer north-east, for he thought that Portugal lay in that direction. For two months they never sighted land, and then they caught sight of a pinnacle belonging to a Galician pirate, who told them they were off Sines, and they were overcome with joy after their terrible experiences. They had sailed through the unknown for sixty days and been obliged to throw overboard seventeen corpses of their comrades, 'burying their flesh in the bellies of fish'. Henry was all the more distressed at the loss of so many brave men because he had brought nearly all of them up, 'but he believed that their souls had found salvation' and took especial care of their wives and children.¹

The death of Tristão and his companions did not daunt others, and in the same year Zarco sent out his nephew Alvaro Fernandes to go still farther south and achieve some new thing for his lord; so they sailed past Cape Verde to the Cape of Masts, which they had attained the previous year, finding nothing on shore more worthy of mention than some elephants' dung as big as a man. Still going south, they went as far as the Tabite river, thirty-two leagues beyond the Nuno, and landed at various points and experienced the poisoned arrows of the men of Guinea, though they avoided fighting with them by Henry's orders, and finally they reached a point 110 leagues beyond Cape Verde. As this caravel had gone beyond any others, the crew on their return received the reward promised for such an achievement, 100 doubloons from the Regent Pedro and the same amount from Henry, who was very happy on account of the advance made, though practically no booty had been brought home.²

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. 86.

² *Ibid.* 87.

Moved by the rewards offered and regardless of the risks, nine caravels sailed from Portugal in 1446-47 for Guinea, and at Madeira, where they called to provision, they were joined by two ships captained by Tristão Teixeira and Garcia Homem, Zarco's son-in-law. Putting in at Gomera, they landed the Canarians who had been taken, as related before, and embarked some of Henry's household. Eight of the vessels went to the Rio Grande, and going on shore the mariners found the fields sown with rice and cotton trees, but as they entered a thick grove a large band of Guinea men fell upon them, and they had to retire with the loss of five men, who died from poisoned arrows. These weapons struck such fear into them that they went no farther.¹

To the same year belongs the expedition of Gomes Pires to the Rio do Ouro, which contented itself with slave-raiding, because the Moors would not trade. In view of this refusal the Prince sent out his squire Diogo Gil in 1447 to Messa, near Cape Non, to try traffick-ing there, and by the help of John Fernandes fifty-one Guinea men were obtained in exchange for eighteen Moors, together with a lion, which Henry afterwards sent to Galway as a present to an agent of his in that town.² In the same year Antão Gonçalves tried to trade at the Rio do Ouro, but had the same experience as Gomes Pires and nearly met the fate of Nuno Tristão. The whole coastline was hostile to the Christians, and in 1448 they suffered another disaster.

The report of the voyages had reached Scandinavia, and one Vallarte, a courtier of King Christopher,

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. 88.

² There was an active trade between Galway and Portugal in the fifteenth century; Portuguese ships visiting Bristol would cross to Ireland and back before returning home, Shillington and Chapman, *op. cit.* pp. 66, 67.

desirous of seeing the world, travelled to Portugal and asked Henry to let him have a caravel to go to Guinea. His wish was granted, and he was told to visit the ruler of Cape Verde, and if he proved to be a Christian, as had been reported, to ask him to aid the Portuguese in their war against the Moors. A knight of Christ accompanied Vallarte to direct the sailors and act as envoy to the black potentate, and two natives of that land went as interpreters. Owing to 'great toils' at sea, it took them exactly six months to reach Cape Verde from Lisbon, and though their relations with the natives were at first quite friendly, one day when the Danish knight went on shore in the ship's boat, he and his companions were attacked without reason or warning and either slain or taken prisoners. Years later captives from those parts told Henry that in a castle very far inland three of the Christians were still living; one of them was probably the man whom Antoniotto Uso di Mare met and took to be a member of the expedition of Vivaldi. As this sailed in 1291, he could only have been a descendant, and even then would not have kept his white colour or known the language.¹

This voyage is the last recorded by Zurara. Up to 1446 fifty-one caravels had gone to those parts and passed 450 leagues beyond Cape Bojador, 'and it was found that the coast ran south with many promontories, and the Infant had it all added to the navigating charts'.²

The extent of coast previously known for certain was 200 leagues and it had now been increased to 650. Moreover, whereas what had been shewn on the *Mappa Mundi* before was depicted at hazard, what was now placed on the charts came from actual observation. At

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. 94.

² *Ibid.* cap. 78.

the beginning of his chronicle Zurara gives four of the reasons which inspired Henry's efforts, and ends it with the fifth, the conversion of the infidels; and counting those who had been brought to Portugal, he found that down to 1448 they numbered 927, 'of whom the greater part were turned into the true way of salvation'.¹ Here he concludes the volume, expressing his intention to write another reaching to the end of Henry's life, although he says the events of subsequent years were not conducted with the same labour and courage, because the trader took the place of the soldier. The second volume of the *Chronicle of Guinea* appears never to have been compiled.

It will have been noted that few of the mariners went straight on the road to discovery, according to Henry's wish; all the advance made was due to some three or four of them. The time, energy and money expended in the years from 1434 to 1448 produced, as it seems to us, comparatively little result, because so few of the men entered heartily into their master's ideas, and the progress would have been even slower but for the lure of adventure, trading profits, advancement or vengeance. This is the impression a careful reader cannot help drawing from the narrative of Zurara, which for the most part evidently incorporates the naïve reports taken down by writers who had preceded him from the lips of the sailors, and reveals their native egotism without an attempt at concealment. Yet we have no cause to be surprised, for the frailty of human nature in general is no less to-day, though it exhibits itself under different aspects. In some respects we are perhaps better than they were, in others we are probably worse, because more instructed.

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. 96.

A national interest in the voyages could not have been aroused without the hope of material gain. Had that inducement been lacking, they would have ended with Henry's life. The real progress came from a little company whom he inspired with his ideals, some of whom carried on his work when he was gone, and so well that two of them, Diogo Cão and Bartholomew Dias, accomplished in three voyages and in four years more than their predecessors in forty, though it is fair to say that they served John II, a man with the will and power to speed up exploration.

After 1448 there is a hiatus of several years in the history of discovery, and the authorities make no effort to explain it, so that we are driven to seek the reason for ourselves. It may perhaps be found in political events, and first in the duel between Pedro and his partisans and the nobility, which though liquidated at the battle of Albarrobeira, left problems which must have compelled Henry's attention; and secondly, in the struggle for the Canaries, in which he seems to have been actively engaged from 1450 until 1455, when the marriage of Henry IV of Castile to Joana, daughter of King Duarte, brought a temporary cessation of hostilities.

Henry's financial embarrassments must already have been heavy, though he was assisted by an annual grant of sixteen *contos* from the crown, for he left debts to the amount of 35,000 *dobras* or about £130,000, an enormous sum for those times.¹ He could therefore hardly have afforded to finance voyages of exploration as well as military expeditions against the Canaries, and this may

¹ These are the figures of Snr. Armando Cortezão, *Subsídios para a história da Guiné e Cabo Verde* (Lisbon, 1931), p. 6. Among his creditors were the Crown, the Duke of Braganza and the monastery of Alcobaça.

VOYAGES FROM 1445 TO 1448

explain the silence of old historians on this subject for the years from 1448 to 1455.

Trading ventures continued, however, and when the next voyages recorded, those of Cadamosto, were made their aim was commercial. Nevertheless they promoted the cause of intensive discovery to a greater extent than the earlier ones.

CHAPTER VI

FIRST VOYAGE OF ALVISE DA CADAMOSTO

WE have now to deal with the exploits of some Italian traders and seamen under Henry's patronage, and in the first place with Alvise da Cadamosto,¹ an intelligent and careful observer, who relates his experiences by sea and land with a natural eloquence contrasting with the irregular style of Zurara, and supplies a wealth of information about native life in Africa, more than is found in any writer of the century. Unfortunately he seems to have set the example, followed by his countrymen Columbus and Vespucci, of claiming a discovery that he had not made, while taking to himself all the credit for those he had. Cadamosto belonged to a patrician family of Venice;² his father Giovanni was a wealthy man, who was led by avarice into lawsuits and fell into disgrace, and finally in 1453 he was banished. The desire to repair the fortunes of the family and make for himself both money

¹ The correct spelling of his name is Ča' da Mosto, which means the family of Mosto, but the accepted form in English is used here. His home may be seen on the Grand Canal in Venice.

² New facts about Alvise and his family are given in a pamphlet by Signor A. da Mosto, *Il navigatore Alvise da Mosto e la sua famiglia* (Venice, 1928), an off-print from the *Archivio Veneto*, vol. ii, 1927. The account of his voyages given in our text has been compared with the new edition of Signor Rinaldo Caddeo (Milan, 1929), which contains a bibliography and much important matter. No complete English version of Cadamosto's voyages has been printed in modern times, and Major's translation of parts is sometimes less accurate than the Portuguese by Trigo. A French translation was published by Charles Schefer (Paris, 1895).

and fame, induced Alvise to embark on trading enterprises abroad; and when we first hear of him in 1454, he had already visited Alexandria and Flanders and was resolved to return to the North in company with his brother Antonio. On 8 August of that year, therefore, he embarked on the trading fleet bound for Flanders under the command of the chevalier Marco Zeno. Bad weather compelled them to stop at Cape St. Vincent, near which, at the village of Raposeira, Henry happened to be staying. When the latter heard of their arrival, he sent his private secretary, Antão Gonçalves, and Patrizio di Conti, Venetian Consul in Portugal, to visit them, with samples of Madeira sugar, dragon's blood and other products of the lands he had found and colonised, and they declared that those who had voyaged to those parts had made large profits, for one *soldo* spent had brought them seven and sometimes ten.

Tempted by this story, Cadamosto asked if the Infant allowed anyone who so desired to sail there, and was told that he did, on certain conditions: if the adventurer equipped and loaded a caravel at his own expense, he must on his return pay Henry a fourth of the produce; if the Prince equipped the vessel and the adventurer loaded it, the profit would be shared equally; if nothing was brought back, Henry would bear the whole expense. Cadamosto was assured that the voyage could not fail to realise a large profit and that the Prince would be delighted if a Venetian made it, and would specially favour him, because he believed that spices would be found, of which the Venetians possessed more knowledge than any other people. Cadamosto then had an interview with the Prince, who confirmed all that had been said, and after purchasing on board the articles he deemed necessary for his voyage, the former disem-

barked and the fleet sailed off to Flanders. Cadamosto was hospitably entertained by Henry for some months, during which he had full opportunity to learn his character; and in the following year the Prince equipped a new caravel of forty-five tons for him, captained by Vincent Dias, of whom we have already heard, and on 22 March 1455 they sailed for Madeira and arrived on the 25th at Porto Santo. Cadamosto found the island¹ producing wheat and oats sufficient for its population and abounding in cattle, wild boars and rabbits; it also gave dragon's blood, the best honey in the world, and wax, and the coast was a good fishing-ground.

On the 28th they went on to Madeira, which then contained four principal settlements, Machico, Santa Cruz, Funchal and Camara dos Lobos, and some smaller ones; these could furnish about 800 men, of whom 120 would be horsemen. Though the island was mountainous like Sicily, it was very fertile and produced an average of 30,000 Venetian *stara* of wheat yearly. The soil at first yielded sixty-fold, but this had been reduced to thirty or forty at the time of Cadamosto's visit. The island was very well watered, and on the eight or more streams which traversed it saw-mills had been built, which worked constantly in making wooden articles and all kinds of tables with which they supplied the whole of Portugal and other lands. Some were of a fragrant cedar like cypress, others of yew, also very beautiful and red in colour.

The sugar-canes, which Henry had imported from Sicily, were producing so abundantly that 400 *cantaros*² of sugar were made at one boiling, and the climate was

¹ Cadamosto says that the islands were discovered twenty-seven years previously; the figure should be thirty-five.

² The *cantaro* is the same as the *alqueire*, which contains thirteen litres.

so favourable that the quality was likely to increase. White sweetmeats were made in great perfection and honey and wax were produced, but in small quantities. The wines were extremely good, considering that the vines were young, and they not only sufficed for local needs, but were exported; the Malvoisie vine bore as many grapes as leaves, in bunches two or three or even four palms in length. There were wild peacocks, some of them white, but no partridges or other game, except quails, and wild boars in the mountains. There had also been an immense number of pigeons, and some were still to be seen, which they caught by the neck with a kind of lasso and pulled down from the trees; the birds, having never known man, were not afraid of him. There were plenty of cattle and many of the inhabitants were wealthy, for the whole country was like a garden. Cadamosto also mentions the existence of houses of Friars Minor, whom he calls men of holy life.

From Madeira they sailed to the Canaries. Four of them, Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, Gomera and Ferro, were inhabited by Christians; the other three, Grand Canary, Teneriffe and Palma, by pagans. The Christians lived on barley-bread, meat and goat's milk, but they had neither wine nor corn, except what was imported, and little fruit. There were numbers of wild asses, especially in Ferro. Great quantities of a plant called orchil for dyeing were sent from the islands to Cadiz and Seville, and thence to other parts both East and West; they also produced goat's leather, tallow and excellent cheeses. The inhabitants of the four Christian islands spoke different languages, so that they could with difficulty understand each other. There were no walled places, but the inhabitants had redoubts in the mountains, the passes to which were so difficult that they could not

be taken except by a siege. These four islands were all large, but those inhabited by pagans were larger and more populous, especially Grand Canary, which had about 8000 or 9000 inhabitants, and Teneriffe, the largest of all, said to contain from 14,000 to 15,000; Palma had few, but was very beautiful. The Christians had never been able to subdue these three islands, as they had plenty of men to defend them; the mountains were lofty and the passes dangerous.

Teneriffe, whose burning peak was visible, according to sailors, at a distance of two hundred and fifty Italian miles, and measured sixty miles from the foot to the summit,¹ was governed by nine chiefs, bearing the title of Dukes. Son succeeded to father, not by inheritance, but by force. Their only weapons were stones and wooden javelins; some of these were pointed with sharpened horn instead of iron, others merely had the point hardened by fire.

The inhabitants went naked, except some few who wore goats' skins; they anointed their bodies with goats' fat, mixed with the juice of certain herbs, which swelled the skin and defended it from cold, although the climate was mild. They dwelt in caverns in the mountains and their food was barley, flesh, goat's milk and some fruit, especially figs. They had no religion, but some worshipped the sun, others the moon and planets, with strange forms of idolatry.

The women were not held in common, but each man might have as many wives as he liked; no maiden, however, was taken to wife until she had passed a night with the chief, and this they held a very great honour.

¹ According to R. H. Major the perpendicular height is 12,180 feet, but the distance in ascending from the foot to the summit may fairly be computed at sixty miles.

Cadamosto obtained these facts from inhabitants of the four Christian islands, who were wont to attack the other islands by night and carry off men and women, and send them to Spain to be sold as slaves. It sometimes happened that Christians were captured in these expeditions, but the natives, instead of killing them, made them slaughter their goats, and skin and prepare them, an occupation which they looked upon as most degrading; and they kept them at this work until they could earn their ransom.

Another of their customs was, that when one of their chiefs took up his office, someone would offer himself to die in honour of the festival, and on the day appointed they all assembled in a deep valley, where, after certain ceremonies had been performed, the victim who chose to die for his lord threw himself from a height, and was dashed to pieces. Afterwards the chief was held bound to do the victim honour, and to reward his family with gifts. The Canarians were experts in running and jumping; they leapt from rock to rock like goats and could throw a stone stoutly and with a sure aim. Both men and women painted their skins with the juice of certain herbs, green, red and yellow, and esteemed such colours as much as Europeans did fine clothes.

Cadamosto visited the islands of Gomera and Ferro, and also touched at Palma, but did not land, because he was anxious to continue his voyage.

Sailing southwards, in a few days he reached Cape Branco, 870 miles from the Canaries, during two-thirds of which he was out of sight of land. This cape was so named by the Portuguese, who discovered it, from the whiteness of the sand, on which there was no sign of grass or of any vegetation whatever. On all this coast Cadamosto found abundance of good big fish, which

he compared with those near Venice. The Bay of Arguim was very shallow throughout, and it had many shoals, both of sand and rock. The currents were so strong that men did not venture to sail except in the daytime, and even then they constantly heaved the lead; two ships had already been wrecked on those shoals.¹ Only one of the islands in the bay had drinking water, that of Arguim.

Inland from Cape Branco was a place named Oden,² distant about six days' camel-journey; it was not enclosed with walls, but was a resort for the Arabs and caravans trading between Timbuktu and other places belonging to the negroes, and Barbary. The inhabitants lived on dates and barley; they drank the milk of camels and other animals, having no wine; they kept cows and goats, but no great number, as the soil was barren, and their cattle were small compared with those of Venice. The people were Mohammedans, and great enemies of Christianity; they had no settled habitations, but wandered continually over the deserts, travelling between the country of the negroes and Barbary. They went in great numbers, with long trains of camels, conveying copper, silver and other things from Barbary to Timbuktu and the country of the blacks, and bringing back in exchange gold and malaguetta pepper.³ These people were tawny, and both sexes wore white tunics with red borders, without any linen underneath; the men had turbans like the Moors, and always went barefoot. Lions, leopards and ostriches abounded in these deserts, and Cadamosto thought the eggs of the last very good eating.

¹ Duarte Pacheco says the same.

² Wadan, now in French territory

³ Grown at Benin; after the Portuguese reached this coast, they diverted the trade in pepper from the land route and carried it by sea to Lisbon.

He speaks of the trading contract made by Henry at Arguim for ten years in the following manner. None were to enter the gulf to trade with the Arabs who came to the coast, excepting those who had a share in the contract; these possessed houses in the island, and factors to buy from and sell to the Arabs. Their merchandise consisted of cloths, silver, silk handkerchiefs, carpets, etc., but especially wheat, which was eagerly sought after; in return the Arabs gave slaves, brought from the lands of the negroes, and gold.

The Prince had a fort built on the island to protect this trade, and the caravels of Portugal were constantly coming and going. The Arabs owned a great number of Barbary horses, which they took to the land of the negroes to barter for slaves, a good horse being often valued at twelve or fifteen slaves. They brought also Moorish fabrics of silk made in Granada and in Tunis, with silver and a variety of other things, for which they received in exchange a great number of slaves and a small quantity of gold. These slaves they took to Oden and there divided them; part went to Barghah, and thence to Sicily, and part to Tunis and the whole coast of Barbary. The rest were taken to Arguim and there sold to the licensed Portuguese traders, who purchased every year 700 or 800 slaves to send home. Before the regulation of this traffic the Portuguese despatched every year four or more caravels to the Bay of Arguim, the crews of which landed at night, attacked the fishing villages, and carried off both men and women. They did the same all along the coast from Cape Branco to the river Senegal, which divided the land of the Azenegues from that of the blacks. The former were tawny and inhabited the coast beyond Cape Branco, and their district was bordered by that of the above-named Arabs

of Oden. These lived on dates, barley and camel's milk, but also procured millet and beans from their neighbours the negroes, and thus supported life, for they required but little. The Portuguese used to seize and sell them because they were the best kind of slaves; but when Cadamosto arrived, he found that peaceful trading had taken the place of slave-raids and that Prince Henry would not allow injury to be done to those people, because he hoped that they might be converted by kindness, as they were not well established in the faith of Mohammed.

The Azenegues had a strange custom of covering their heads with a piece of linen, the end of which fell over their faces, hiding the mouth and part of the nose; they did this because they said that the mouth was an unseemly thing, which emitted eructations and bad breath, and therefore ought to be concealed, and Cadamosto never saw their mouths uncovered, save when they ate. They had no chiefs among them, but any better off than the rest were treated with more deference and obedience. He found them a poor race, and the most lying and treacherous people in the world. They were of middle height and thin; they wore their black hair flowing down over their shoulders, almost like Germans, and anointed it daily with fish oil—a habit which caused a most offensive smell, but was looked upon as a mark of gentility. They had never heard of Christians, except the Portuguese who had made war on them for thirteen or fourteen years, and when they saw the first sails or ships on the sea they thought them to be great birds with white wings.

About six days' journey from Oden there was a place named Tegazza, whence rock-salt was obtained in great quantities, and carried by the Arabs and Azenegues on the backs of camels to Timbuktu, and

thence to Melli, in the empire of the negroes, where it was sold at 200 or 300 *miticals*¹ the load, in exchange for gold. The Melli country was very hot, and the pasture very bad for quadrupeds, so that three-quarters of those which went with the caravans perished. Thus there were no cattle in the country, and many of the Arabs and Azenegues fell ill and died from the heat. They said that from Tegazza to Timbuktu was forty days' journey on horseback, and from Timbuktu to Melli thirty days'. In reply to enquiries as to what the merchants of Melli did with the salt, the natives said that a small portion was used in their land, for as they were near the equinox, the excessive heat at certain times compelled them to consume it to purify their blood.

Beyond Melli the heat was too great for camels, so that the rest of the salt was carried by negroes, in a long procession, each with a block on his head, and bearing in his hands two forks on which to rest the block when tired. In this way they reached certain waters and piled the salt in mounds, each marking his own pile, and then retired half a day's journey. Afterwards came another tribe of blacks (who would not allow themselves to be seen or spoken to) in large boats, as if from an island. They examined the salt, and put a quantity of gold beside each pile, and then retired, leaving the gold and salt together. When they left, the owners of the salt returned and took the gold, if they found it enough; if not, they again withdrew. The owners of the gold then came back and took the pile which was without it and put more gold beside the other piles, if they wished; if not they left the salt. And so the business was done, without either party seeing the other.² Cadamosto

¹ The *mitical* was equal to about a ducat and a half.

² Herodotus (bk. iv, cap. 196) mentions a similar custom, and it still

enquired of the merchants why the Emperor of Melli, being a great and powerful lord, had not tried to discover who these people were. They replied that not long ago the attempt had been made, and four of the blacks captured in order to bring them before him. Three had been released, but the fourth would not utter a word, either not understanding them, or resolving not to speak; nor would he eat, so that after four days he died. The Emperor was greatly vexed at the result, and asked those who made the captures what size the blacks were and they said that they were very dark and well made, taller than themselves by a hand's-breadth, and had a long lip thick and red, with blood running inside it, but the upper was small; thus they shewed their gums and their teeth were large, and they had two on each side of extraordinary size. Their eyes were black, and very open, which gave them a fierce and savage look. After the capture and death of this negro, the others were so much offended that for three years they did not come with gold to buy the salt; and when they returned the blacks of Melli concluded that they found they could not exist without the salt, for it kept their lips from putrefying. The number of the witnesses to this story convinced Cadamosto of its veracity.

The gold taken to Melli was divided into three parts: the first was sent by caravan to a place called Cochia,¹ which was on the road to Syria and Cairo; the two others to Timbuktu, whence the one was sent to Tuat in the Western Sahara, and so to Tunis; the other part to Oden, and thence to Oran and Ona in Barbary, within the Strait of Gibraltar, and to Fez, Morocco

exists in countries so remote from each other as the Belgian Congo and Sumatra

¹ Kukia, the ancient capital of the Songhay empire, on the Niger near Gao

(Marrakesh), Arzila, Safi, and Messa outside the Strait. It was there bought by Italians, in exchange for a variety of merchandise. This gold was the best product of the land of the Azenegues, and some of that which went to Oden was carried to the coast and sold to the Portuguese at Arguim island.

The Azenegues had no coin, doing their trade by barter, but in some of the inland towns they and the Arabs used cowries which were brought from the Levant to Venice; the gold was sold by the *mitical*, as in Barbary. The inhabitants of that desert had neither religion nor natural lord; the women were brown, and they had little petticoats which were brought from the country of the negroes, and some wore these without any other dress. Those who had the longest breasts were considered the most beautiful, and to develop them, when they reached the age of sixteen or seventeen, they had them bound tightly with a cord, so as to break them and make them hang down; and by frequently pulling these cords they made them grow so long that they sometimes reached the navel. These people rode on horses like the Moors, but they could not keep many on account of the bareness of the land and because the great heat did not let them live long. There were no rains, except in August, September and October. In some years a great number of locusts appeared, as long as a finger and of a red and yellow colour, larger than grasshoppers, and they rose in the air in such numbers as to hide the sun, and for ten or twelve miles nothing else could be seen on the earth or in the air; they destroyed everything where they passed. These creatures came only once in three or four years, or the country would have become unfit for habitation. When Cadamosto was there he saw countless numbers on the shore.

After leaving Cape Branco he went on to the river Senegal, which (he says) was discovered five years before his voyage by three of Henry's caravels. A commercial treaty had been made with the blacks, so that in his time many ships went there.¹ It was more than a mile wide at the mouth, and deep, and a little farther on had another entrance, and between the two there was an island. There were sandbanks at each mouth, and reefs in the sea, extending about a mile from the shore. The tide rose and fell every six hours and extended more than sixty miles up the river, as he learned from Portuguese who had ascended it in their caravels. On entering the river, it was necessary to go with the tide, to avoid the sand-banks and reefs. It was 380 miles from Cape Branco; the coast was nearly all sandy, and was called the Anterote coast, and belonged to the Azenegues.

Cadamosto was surprised to find so great a difference between the inhabitants on the two sides of the river. On the south side the people were very black, stout and well made, and the country verdant, well wooded and fertile, while, on the north side, the men were thin, tawny and short, and the country dry and sterile. This river was said by learned men to be a branch of the Gihon, which came from the Terrestrial Paradise. The ancients named this branch Niger, and said that after watering Ethiopia it ran westward, and, dividing into several branches, fell into the ocean; the Nile was another branch, which flowed through Egypt, and fell into the Mediterranean. This at least was the opinion of travellers.²

¹ The Senegal was found in 1445.

² Cadamosto shared the prevailing confusion between the Nile, Niger and Senegal.

The land of the negroes on the Senegal was the first of those of lower Ethiopia,¹ and the people were called Jaloffs. The country was quite flat as far as Cape Verde, which was the highest land on the whole coast, and was 400 miles from Cape Branco. The kingdom of Senegal was bounded on the east by the country of Tucutor, on the south by the kingdom of Gambia, on the west by the ocean, and on the north by the river. When Cadamosto was there, the King of Senegal was named Zuccolin, and he was twenty-two years of age. The succession was not hereditary, but the nobles chose a king from among their number, who remained on the throne as long as he pleased them. Sometimes they dethroned him by force, at others he made himself powerful enough to resist them, but his position was not firm like that of the Sultan of Cairo. His people were poor and ferocious; they had no walled towns, only miserable villages, with houses of reeds. They did not build them with walls, because they had neither mortar nor stone, and the kingdom was very small, being only about 200 miles square.

The negroes professed Mohammedanism, but were not so strict as the white Moors; the nobles had received some instruction in that faith from the Azenegues or Arabs, but since they had become acquainted with Christians they had less belief in it.

These people usually wore nothing but goats' skins made in the shape of breeches, but some of them, and especially the nobles, had shirts of cotton, for that tree grew there and the women spun them a hand's-breadth wide. They did not know how to make it wider, and were obliged to sew several pieces together when they required a greater width; these shirts reached half-way

¹ The greater part of Africa was then included in the name Ethiopia.

down the thigh, and had wide sleeves which covered half the arm. Besides these, they had breeches of the same cloth, which reached to the instep, and were exceedingly broad, some of them containing thirty or even forty hand's-breadths of cloth, which hung in many folds like a sack in front and behind, reaching to the ground. The women wore nothing above the waist, whether married or not, and below they had a short cotton petticoat going to the middle of the leg. Both sexes went barefoot, and wore nothing on their heads; their hair was well dressed, and fastened up tastefully, though it was very short. The men worked, like the women, at spinning, washing and other things.

After having passed the river Senegal, Cadamosto reached the country of Budomel,¹ about fifty miles farther, which was flat all along the coast. He stopped there because he had heard from the Portuguese that the ruler was an honourable man, who paid for what he bought, and because he had on board the caravel some Spanish horses, which were much valued by the negroes, as well as linen cloths, Moorish silks and other merchandise. Having anchored at a place called the Palma de Budomel, he sent his black interpreter on shore to say that he had goods to dispose of.

Soon the negro king appeared with fifteen horsemen and a hundred and fifty footmen and invited Cadamosto to land, which the latter did, and was well received. He offered the king seven horses and other merchandise to the value of about 300 ducats. The king asked him to stay at his house, which was twenty-five miles inland, promising to pay him in slaves, and before he set out, presented him with a young girl to serve in his cabin; she was very beautiful because very

¹ *Bor-damel* = King *Damel*. Budomel was ruler of Cayor.

black. The king also supplied him with horses and all things necessary for the journey, and when they were within four miles of his house he consigned him to the care of one of his nephews named Bisboror, the lord of a neighbouring village, who received him and entertained him honourably.

Cadamosto remained there twenty-eight days,¹ made frequent visits to the king and saw much of the customs of the country. He had still more opportunity for this when he was obliged to return to the Senegal by land, for the weather was so stormy that, to embark, he had to order his ship to come to the entrance of the river. When he wanted to send word to his men to meet him, he asked if any of the negroes were good swimmers and had the courage to take a letter to the vessel three miles out. Many said yes, but he thought it impossible on account of the high seas, the wind and the sand-banks, nevertheless two men offered themselves. He asked them what he should give them for the enterprise, and they replied two maravedis of tin apiece, and at once entered the water. 'I cannot describe', says Cadamosto, 'the difficulty they had to pass the sand-banks in so furious a sea. Sometimes I lost sight of them, and often I thought they were swallowed up by the waves. At last one of the two could no longer resist the buffeting of the sea and turned back, but the other held on, and after battling for more than an hour, crossed the bank, carried my letter to the ship, and returned with an answer; whence I conclude that the negroes of that coast are the best swimmers in the world.'

¹ He says that it was in November, but this must be a printer's or copyist's error; he left Portugal in March and, after visiting Budomel, met Usodimare in June.

The negro nobles had neither castles nor cities; the king himself possessed nothing but villages with reed huts, and Budomel only ruled over a part of that kingdom, which was small. Those lords did not owe their rank to wealth of treasure or money, for they had neither, but the ceremonies used with them and their retinues entitled them to the name, because they were revered and feared more than grandees in Europe. Like the others, Budomel possessed no palace, but had a certain number of villages which had been assigned to him and his wives, and these he visited in succession. The place in which Cadamosto stayed contained between forty and fifty houses of reeds, built close to each other in a circle, encompassed by hedges and screens of large trees, with two or three passages for entrance, and each house had an enclosed court. Budomel had nine wives in this place, and more or less in his other villages. Each wife had five or six young girls for her service, with whom their lord was permitted to live as with his wives, who did not consider this an injury, because it was the custom. Both sexes were very lecherous and the men very jealous, so that they would not let anyone enter the house of their wives and they did not trust even their own sons.

Budomel had always about 200 negroes in attendance upon his person, and there were a number of people who came to him from different places. Between the entrance of his house and his own private apartment there were seven courts, and in the midst of each was a large tree, to shade those who waited for an audience; in these courts his retinue were distributed according to their rank. Few dared approach him except the Christians and Azenegues, who had more freedom in this respect than his own subjects. He maintained great

haughtiness and gravity, and only shewed himself for one hour in the morning, and again for a short time in the evening, near the door of the outermost court.

He used great ceremony in his audiences, for however high the rank of a man might be and even if he were a relation, the latter went down on both knees on entering the door of the court, with his forehead on the earth, and cast sand over his head and shoulders, being quite naked. He remained a long time in this posture, sprinkling himself with sand, and then, dragging himself forward, he approached his lord and, when about two paces away, stopped and offered his petition, but never ceased from throwing sand over himself, all in token of humility. The reply was given in two words and with scarcely a glance towards him. Cadamosto must have witnessed this scene several times, and observes that even if God Himself came on earth, He could not have received greater reverence. He put it down to fear, because the people knew that for a slight fault their lords would seize their wives and children and sell them for slaves.

Budomel welcomed Cadamosto, and allowed him to enter his mosque at the hour of prayer. The Azenegues and Arabs he had with him, who, like priests, instructed him in the law of Mohammed, were summoned to attend, and Budomel performed his orisons in the following manner. Standing up, he raised his eyes towards heaven, then walked forward two steps, uttered a few words in a low tone, and prostrated himself on the ground, which he kissed respectfully; in this he was followed by the Azenegues and the rest of his retinue. He repeated these actions and continued in prayer about half an hour, and when he had finished he asked Cadamosto what he thought of it, and desired him to give

him some idea of the Christian religion. Cadamosto says he told him, in the presence of the Arabs, that the Mohammedan religion was false, and that the Catholic was true and holy, which enraged the priests; but Budomel only laughed, and said that the faith of the Christians must be good, because God, who had bestowed such riches and knowledge on them, must have given them a good religion also. He added that he thought the Mohammedan religion was good also, and that the negroes must have a better chance of salvation than the Christians, because God being just, and having given the Christians so many advantages in this world that they had a paradise here, and so few to the negroes, the latter ought to have it in the next world. Budomel shewed much good sense and reflection in his remarks, and took pleasure in conversing about religion, and Cadamosto thought he would easily have been induced to embrace Christianity, had he not been afraid of offending the people. His nephew told Cadamosto this, and took delight in hearing him speak of the faith.

The table of Budomel was supplied in the same manner as already related of the King of Senegal; the nobles ate upon the ground, like beasts, and no one might eat with them, save the Moors who instructed them in the law. The common people ate in companies of ten or twelve, round a basket full of meat, in which they all put their hands; they took little at a time, but had four or five meals daily.

During his stay on land, he went two or three times to a market or fair, which was held on Mondays and Fridays in the meadow near, and attended by numbers of both sexes from five or six miles round. There he came to know the poverty of the people, as shewn by their merchandise, which consisted of cotton in small

quantities, nets and cotton cloths, vegetables, oil, millet, wooden bowls and palm mats. They often brought gold dust, though in very small quantities; but they had no money, and all the traffic was by barter. The niggers came to look at Cadamosto as at a spectacle. They had never seen a Christian, and were equally surprised by his white skin and dress in the Spanish style, and some of them touched his hands and arms and rubbed him with saliva, to find out if his whiteness was paint or real flesh. His object in going to these markets was to see if any quantity of gold was brought there.

Horses were valued by the negroes because they were difficult to obtain. The Arabs and Azenegues imported them from Barbary, but the great heat soon killed them; besides, the beans, leaves and millet, which were their only food, made them very fat. A good horse with harness was worth from nine to fourteen slaves, and when a noble purchased one he went to the sorcerers, who lighted a fire of dried herbs, over the smoke of which they held the horse by the bridle, and uttered their charms. Next they anointed him with oil, shut him up for eighteen or twenty days, so that no one might see him, and tied round his neck little Moorish figures covered with red leather, in the belief that these protected him in war.

The negro women were very gay, especially the young ones, and very fond of singing and dancing; their time for dancing was at night, by moonlight.

Nothing caused so much astonishment to the natives as the discharges of cross-bows and bombards from the caravel. Cadamosto caused a bombard to be fired when some of the negroes were on board, the noise of which terrified them extremely; but they were still more surprised when they were told that one discharge could

kill 100 men, and declared that it could only be the work of the devil. They were delighted with the sound of the bagpipes, and thought it was a living animal which sung the different tunes. Seeing their simplicity, Cadamosto placed the instrument in their hands, and when they saw that it really was artificial, they said it must be made by God, since it emitted such sweet and varied sounds. Everything about the vessel excited their admiration, and they thought the eyes painted on the prow of the vessel were real eyes, by which it saw its way through the water, and held the Europeans as great magicians and almost equal to the devil himself, since travellers by land found it difficult enough to keep the right road from one place to another, while they, in their vessels, could find their way on the sea, however distant they might be from the land. A lighted candle also seemed to them a wonder, and when Cadamosto made some candles before their eyes and lighted them, they said that the white people knew everything. They had two kinds of musical instruments; one was a sort of Moorish drum, the other a kind of violin with two strings, played with the fingers, but there was little music to be got out of them.

After his sojourn in Budomel's country, Cadamosto, as he had bought some slaves, resolved to go on to Cape Verde and make further discoveries, for he had heard from Prince Henry (who received information from time to time about Negro-land) that beyond the Senegal there was another river called the Gambia, and negroes who had been to Portugal said it contained gold and that whoever went there would return rich. Allured by this prospect, he took leave of Budomel, and was about to set sail, when one morning two vessels appeared which proved to belong, the one to Antoniotto

Usodimare, a Genoese,¹ and the other to some squires of Henry. They were going together beyond Cape Verde to try their luck and make discoveries, and as Cadamosto had the same object, he joined them and the three caravels sailed towards the south, keeping sight of land, and the day following they came to the cape. The name Cape Verde had been given it by the Portuguese discoverers because they found it covered with trees which never lost their verdure; it projected far into the sea, and had two small mountains at the point, and around it were many villages of the Senegal negroes, consisting of reed huts. Joined to it were sand-banks, extending for half a mile into the sea. After doubling the cape, the ships came upon three uninhabited islands filled with large trees; they anchored at the largest,² hoping to take in water, but were disappointed. However, they found quantities of birds' nests and eggs of an unknown kind, and spent a day there fishing and made large hauls; some of the fish weighed twelve or fifteen pounds, and this was in June. The following day they continued their course, always in sight of land, and beyond the cape found a gulf. The coast was low, and covered with fine large trees, which were always green, and grew so close to the sea that they seemed to be drinking from it. The prospect was so beautiful that Cadamosto declared that he had never seen anything to compare to it; the land was watered by many rivers and small streams, but as it was impossible for the vessels to enter, they could not take in water.

Beyond the gulf, the coast was peopled by two nations of negroes, the Barbacini and the Serreri, both inde-

¹ For biographical details about this man (who has been erroneously supposed by some writers to be the same person as Antonio da Noli on the ground that the name Usodimare merely indicates a profession) *vide* Caddeo, *op. cit.* p. 87.

² Goree.

pendent of the King of Senegal; they had no distinctions of rank among them, but only of personal qualities. They were idolaters, lawless, and very cruel, and fought with poisoned arrows, the least scratch of which that fetched blood caused instant death. They were very black and very well made. The country was thickly wooded and full of lakes and rivers, and could only be approached through very narrow defiles, which had helped them to preserve their independence. The kings of Senegal had often tried to conquer them, but had always been foiled by the poisoned arrows and natural difficulties.

Running down the coast with a favourable wind, they discovered the mouth of a river, about a bow-shot in width and very shallow, and called it the Barbacini, which name it bears in Cadamosto's chart. It was sixty miles from Cape Verde. They continued to follow the coast day after day, anchoring each evening four or five miles from the shore, and at sunrise they hoisted sail, keeping a man at the masthead, and two in the fore part of the vessel, to watch for rocks and sand-banks. Finally they arrived at the mouth of another river as large as the Senegal, which was so beautiful, with trees growing down to the water's edge, that they anchored and determined to send one of their negro interpreters on shore. Each ship had some on board whom they had brought from Portugal. These men had been sold as slaves to the first Portuguese navigators and had become Christians and learned the language,¹ and had now come out with the promise that if they supplied other slaves they would obtain their freedom. Lots were drawn to find which of the three ships should land one of these interpreters, and it fell on that of the Genoese. He de-

¹ Portuguese.

spatched a boat with orders to his people not to approach nearer than necessary to land the interpreter, who was to obtain information respecting the condition of the country and if it contained gold. They set him on shore, and when they had put off to a little distance, a number of armed negroes, who had been waiting in ambush, advanced to meet him. After some talk, which the men in the boat did not hear, they attacked him furiously and killed him before he could be rescued. When those in the ships heard the news, they thought that a people who had shewn themselves so cruel to one of their own countrymen would be still more barbarous to strangers, and continued their course along the coast, which increased in beauty and verdure the farther they went, but was very flat.

At length they came to the mouth of a very large river, which at the narrowest part was not less than three or four miles wide, so that the ships could enter it with safety, and the next day they judged they had reached the much desired country of Gambia. They sent on the smallest caravel, well equipped with men and arms, to sound the river, and if they found water enough for the larger vessels to follow they were to signal. Finding that it was four feet deep, they did so and resolved to send up armed boats with the caravel, with instructions that if the negroes came to attack them they were to return without fighting, because, their object being to establish peaceful trade, they could only do this by using art and not by force. Two miles up the river the boats found sixteen feet of water. The banks of the river were extremely beautiful and covered with magnificent trees, but, as they proceeded, it became so winding that they did not care to go farther. As they turned back, they saw, at the entrance of a small river which

ran into the large one, three canoes made each of a single piece of wood. As the men in the boats did not know the intentions of the negroes and had heard that the people of Gambia used poisoned arrows, they rowed back with great speed, according to their instructions, but when they got near to the caravel, the blacks were only a bow-shot behind them. They were about twenty-five or thirty in number, and seemed much surprised at the sight of the caravel, as though neither they nor their ancestors had seen the like, and refused to come near and finally rowed off.

The following day the two caravels, which had remained at the mouth of the river, took advantage of the wind and tide to enter it and rejoin their companion. After going four miles up, one after the other, they perceived that they were being followed by fifteen canoes, so they turned upon the negroes, and thinking that their arrows might be poisoned, covered themselves as well as they could and took up their posts and waited. The canoes in two files surrounded the prow of Cadamosto's ship, which was in advance of the rest, and the oarsmen, raising their oars in the air, stared at the Europeans as at a portent. They numbered from 130 to 150, dark and handsome men, clad in white cotton shirts and wearing white hats with a plume, like Germans, except that the hats had a white wing on each side and a feather in the middle, as though they were warriors. At the prow of each canoe was a negro, with a round shield that seemed made of leather. No sign of hostility was made on either side until the other caravels approached, and then the negroes laid down their oars and, without any salutation, took to their bows and discharged their arrows. The three caravels, seeing themselves attacked, fired off four cannon, the noise of which astonished the

negroes so much that they threw down their bows, and looked on all sides in the greatest wonder at the stones striking the water. When the noise ceased, they lost fear, and resumed their fire, coming within a stone's-throw of the ships, whereupon the sailors got to work with cross-bows, the first shot from which hit a negro in the breast and killed him; but they continued their attack until a great number of them had been slain, without a single Christian being wounded. When the negroes saw their losses, all the canoes fell upon the smaller caravel, which had few men and those ill-armed, and a battle ensued. Seeing this, Cadamosto placed the smaller vessel between the other two, and gave a general discharge of artillery, which caused the enemy to draw off, and the three caravels were then made fast to each other by a chain and a single anchor was let down which held them firmly.

Afterwards Cadamosto and his companions sought to have speech with the natives, and finally the interpreters, by shouts and signs, induced one of the canoes to approach. Then they asked them why they attacked strangers from a distant land who had come in peace to trade with them, as they had already done with the people of Senegal, and who had brought presents from the King of Portugal for their king. The interpreters asked the name of their country, ruler and river, and invited them to come to the vessels and exchange merchandise. To this the negroes replied that they had heard of the arrival of the white people at Senegal, and that the inhabitants of this latter land must be bad men to have desired their friendship, for they themselves believed the Christians lived on human flesh, and only bought negroes to devour them. Therefore they would not agree to friendship but would kill the Christians if pos-

sible, and take their spoil to their sovereign, who lived three days' journey inland, and they said their country was called Gambia. On this the wind got up, and, seeing their ill-will, the caravels made sail against them, but they fled, and thus the conflict ended.

The commanders then consulted as to whether they should sail further up the river, at least 100 miles, in the hope of finding better people, but the sailors were so anxious to return home that they all cried out that they would not agree and had done enough that voyage. The captains had to submit to avoid trouble, sailors being obstinate men, and on the following day they set out on their homeward voyage to Portugal.

All the time they remained at the mouth of the river, they saw the north star only once, when it seemed to be very low down over the sea, and even then only in clear weather. They also observed six other stars equally low; they were clear, brilliant and large and arranged thus
 *
 * * * *. They took them for the Southern Chariot,¹ but

*
 did not see the principal star, nor could they have done, without losing sight of the north star. In the same place they found the night to be eleven and a half hours and the day twelve and a half early in July. The country was hot all through the year, though it had a winter from the beginning of July to the end of October, and then it rained every day, and the rain was accompanied by violent thunder and by lightning. This was the time when the negroes began to sow, as in Senegal, and their food was milk, flesh and vegetables. Cadamosto heard that in the interior even the rain was hot; there was no twilight as in Europe, for as soon as the shades of night

¹ The text reads *il carro dell' astro*; some have identified it with the Southern Cross.

disappeared, the sun was seen, but for about half an hour it gave no light and was obscured as by smoke. Cadamosto and his comrades believed that the sudden appearance of the sun was due to the flatness of the country.

Losses in business had driven Usodimare from home to try and repair his fortunes, and on his return to Lisbon from the voyage in which he met Cadamosto, he wrote a letter to his creditors, dated 12 December 1455, describing his adventures. According to this account he had sailed in a caravel to the parts of Guinea and, after 800 miles, reached the river Gambia.¹ The fishermen attacked him with poisoned arrows which compelled him to turn back, but after making seventy leagues, he found a black chief who sold him thirty-one slaves, some elephants' teeth and parrots, and sent with him an ambassador to the King of Portugal. Usodimare told his creditors that he was charged by the King to take back the ambassador, who was to make a commercial treaty between the negro potentate and Portugal, and he would start in ten days. Full of hopes, he described the land to which he was going as possessing very good air and being very beautiful, and further reported having found there an Italian whom he believed to be a survivor of the Vivaldi expedition of 1291. This is obviously impossible, and though the man might have been a descendant, it is more likely, as the Viscount de Santarem thinks, that he was one of the members of Vallarte's expedition of 1447.

¹ Usodimare's letter is in Caddeo, *op. cit.* p. 153.

CHAPTER VII

SECOND VOYAGE OF CADAMOSTO—DIOGO GOMES AND ANTONIO DA NOLI—DIS- COVERY OF THE CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

IN the next year Cadamosto, together with Usodimare, resolved to make a second voyage to the Gambia, and equipped two caravels for the purpose; and when Henry knew of this he gave the required permission and fitted out a caravel of his own to accompany them.

The three ships set out from Lagos in the beginning of May, and the wind being favourable they reached the Canaries in a few days, and without stopping went on to Cape Branco. When they had sight of it they put farther out to sea, and the night following were caught by a storm from the south-west, and so as not to turn back they steered north-west during three days and two nights, and on the third day caught sight of land, to their surprise, for they did not know that any lay in that direction. Two men being sent to the mast-head saw two large islands,¹ the notice of which caused the company to give thanks to God who had led them to see new things. Thinking they might be inhabited, they sailed towards one of them, and having found good anchorage, put a boat out, but the men who landed found no sign of its being inhabited. The next day, to make quite sure,

¹ The Cape Verde islands, but, in view of their situation, Cadamosto's account of the course is clearly erroneous.

Cadamosto sent ten men on shore armed with cross-bows, with orders to ascend the highest part and see if they could find anything, or see other islands. They met with no signs of man, but found an immense number of pigeons, which allowed themselves to be taken by the hand; and from the mountain they descried three other large islands, one towards the north, and two in a southward direction. They thought they could see still more islands in the west farther out to sea, but Cadamosto did not care to go there, fearing to waste time, and because he thought they would be also wild and uninhabited. But afterwards others, at the news of his discovery of the four islands, went farther and found that the islands numbered ten, and contained nothing but birds of various kinds and fish.

The three caravels then went on their way and came in sight of the two other islands, and in one which appeared covered with trees they discovered the mouth of a river, and anchored there to get water for the ships. Some of the sailors landed and, following the river, came upon small lakes of salt, fine and white, of which they brought a great quantity to the vessel. The water was excellent and the sailors found many turtles, the upper shells of which were larger than a shield, and killed them and cooked them in different ways, observing that they had formerly eaten some of the same sort in the Gulf of Arguim, but not so large. Cadamosto ate them, and found them like veal and of good smell and taste, and he had a good number salted which proved useful on the voyage. At the mouth of the river and farther up they fished and found incredible numbers and great variety of fish, many being unknown to them. The river was a bow-shot wide, so that a ship of 150 tons could get into it easily.

They remained two days to refresh themselves, and named the first island on which they had landed Boavista, because it was the first they had seen in those parts; and the other, which seemed the largest of the four, they called Santiago, because they came to anchor there on the feast of St. James and St. Philip.¹

After this they set sail for Cape Verde, and in a few days came in sight of land at a place, the Two Palms, between Cape Verde and the river Senegal, and after passing the cape they reached the river Gambia, which they entered and, without opposition on the part of the negroes, proceeded up it by day, always sounding. The native canoes which they met did not dare to approach. Ten miles up they anchored one Sunday near an island, where they buried one of the sailors, who had died of fever, and named it after him, S. André, and then continued their course, followed by some canoes at a distance; and Cadamosto's interpreters called to them that they might approach with safety and shewed them stuffs, offering to give them some.

At length, overcoming their fears, they came near to his caravel, and one of the negroes went on board and understood the interpreter. He was very much astonished at the vessel, and especially at the navigation with sails, for they were only accustomed to use oars, and knew of no other means. The colour and dress of the Europeans amazed him, for his people were mostly naked, though some wore white cotton shirts. Cadamosto says he received him with great kindness, giving him many trifles with which he was well content. He asked him many questions and learnt that the country was called

¹ According to Cadamosto, but it has been remarked that this feast is on 1 May, which was about the time they started, and the feast of St. James the Great, 25 July, has been suggested as a substitute.

Gambia, and that the chief ruler was named Forosangoli, who lived about ten days' journey from the river, between the south and south-west, and was a vassal of the Emperor of Melli, head of all the negroes. There were many other lesser lords who lived near the river, and the native offered, if Cadamosto wished it, to take him to one named Batti-Mansa and induce him to be friendly. This offer pleased him greatly and he took the man in his vessel up the river, until they reached the residence of Batti-Mansa, which was about sixty miles from the mouth. Cadamosto remarks that they sailed up the river in an easterly direction and saw many tributaries which flowed into it; the place where they anchored was much narrower than the mouth, which was about a mile in breadth.

Cadamosto sent one of the interpreters with the negro to Batti-Mansa, carrying a fine silk garment in the Moorish style as a present, and bade him say that they had come by order of the King of Portugal, a Christian, to make friendship with him, and learn if he needed the goods of their country, which the King would send yearly. Hearing a good report of the strangers, Batti-Mansa sent some of his people to the caravel. Friendship was established, and European goods were exchanged for slaves and some gold; but the latter was not equal in amount to the expectations raised by the accounts of the people of Senegal, who, being very poor themselves, thought it a great deal, while it seemed little to the Portuguese. Gold was more prized there than in Europe, but the negroes exchanged it for things of small value.

The caravels remained there eleven days, during which many negroes came on board, some from curiosity, others to sell their goods, cotton cloths, white,

striped and coloured, very well made, and gold rings. They also brought baboons and marmots, civet and skins of civet cat, all which they sold very cheaply; others came with fruits, especially dates, which the sailors ate, but which Cadamosto would not touch, fearing they were not wholesome.

Every day fresh people differing in language visited the caravels, and canoes with both men and women were constantly going up and down the river from one place to another, like boats in Europe, but they only used oars and rowed standing, and always had a man to steer. They did not use rowlocks, but held the oars in their hands, and they were in the form of a half lance, about seven feet long, with a round board like a tray at the end. With these they impelled their canoes at a high speed, keeping close to the coast from one land to another, and there are many mouths of little rivers into which they entered and were safe. They rarely went far off, for fear of being captured by the neighbouring people and sold for slaves. At the end of eleven days Cadamosto and his companions resolved to return to the river's mouth, because many of them had begun to fall ill with fever.

From what he had seen and been told about the people during his short stay, they were generally idolaters and had great faith in enchantments, but they all believed in a God, and some were Mohammedans, but only those who travelled about and traded with other countries. Their manner of life resembled that of the natives of the Senegal, and they had the same food, except that they ate rice and dogs' flesh, which Cadamosto had never heard of elsewhere. They dressed in cotton, which they had in abundance, while nearly all the natives of Senegal went naked; the women

dressed like the men, but were accustomed to tattoo their skins, when they were young, with a hot needle. The country was very hot, and the heat naturally increased to the south and was much greater on the river than on the sea, on account of the quantity of trees which grew everywhere. Their girth was out of proportion to their height, and Cadamosto saw one on the bank where they took in water which, though low, measured seventeen arm's-length at the foot;¹ the trunk was hollowed out and had spreading branches which gave great shade. Some of these trees were even larger and thicker, shewing that the land was fertile, because well watered.

There were great numbers of elephants, and Cadamosto saw three wild ones while his caravel was at anchor, and observes that the natives did not know how to tame them. The negroes hunted on foot with assegais and bows, and all their arms were poisoned. They sought out the animals in the forests and hid behind trees, and sometimes climbed up into them, and from their hiding-places discharged their poisoned weapons, leaping from tree to tree in pursuit, and the elephants, being very heavy animals, were struck many times without being able to defend themselves.

In the river Gambia and other rivers of the country, besides the elephants there was an animal called the 'horse-fish'² which is thus described by Cadamosto: 'It is amphibious, and its body is as large as that of a cow, with very short legs and cloven feet; the head is the shape of a horse's with two big tusks like those of the wild boar, some two palms long. It comes out of the water, and walks like other quadrupeds.' Cadamosto says that it had not been seen in any part visited by

¹ The baobab.

² Hippopotamus.

Christians, except perhaps on the Nile; he also records having met with bats three palms long or more, a number of parrots and a multitude of fishes, different from those of Europe.

The sickness of the men compelled him and his comrades to leave the country of Batti-Mansa, and in a few days they sailed out of the river; and being three caravels and well furnished with provisions, they determined to go farther along the coast. As the land stretched out far into the sea in the form of a cape, they took a westerly course to double it, but found the point of land was no cape to speak of, for the shore was quite straight beyond it. Nevertheless they kept at a distance because there were breakers at four miles from it, and had two men on the look-out, one at the prow and one at the mast-head, to watch for shoals, and only sailed by day with little canvas and great caution and cast anchor at night. They went in line and cast lots every day to decide which caravel should go first; and in this way they coasted along for two days, and on the third they discovered the mouth of a river about half a mile wide. Farther on they saw a little gulf, which seemed to be another river, but as it was late they cast anchor.

The next morning they sailed on, and came to the mouth of another very large river, but somewhat smaller than the river Gambia, the banks of which were covered with trees of extraordinary size and beauty. They sent on shore two boats, with interpreters, to ascertain the name of the river and the ruler of those parts. These emissaries brought back word that the river was called Casa-Mansa, from the name of a negro chief who resided thirty miles up, but was away engaged in war with a neighbouring chief, so they de-

parted the following day. The distance from the river Gambia was about 100 miles.

They continued their course, following the coast, until they came to a cape about twenty miles farther on, to which they gave the name of Cape Roxo, from the red colour of the earth. They next came to the mouth of a river, about a bow-shot in width, which they did not enter, but gave it the name of Rio de Santa Anna.¹ Farther on they found another river of the same size, which they named S. Domingo,² and it was about fifty-five or sixty miles from Cape Roxo.

A day's journey beyond, they came to the mouth of a river so wide that they thought it was a gulf. They were some time crossing, for it was twenty miles over. The south bank was covered with beautiful trees, and when they arrived there they discovered some islands out at sea,³ and then cast anchor, resolving to gain information about the country before they went on. The following day two canoes approached, the larger being one of the caravels, containing more than thirty men, and the other about sixteen. All on board, seeing them, quickly took up arms; but when the negroes drew near, they raised a piece of white linen fastened to an oar, as if to ask for security. The Portuguese replied in the same manner, and the largest of the canoes came alongside Cadamosto's caravel, and its crew shewed great surprise at the sight of white men, the form of the vessel, and the masts and yards, which were a novelty to them. It was a great disappointment to find that none of the interpreters could understand the language of the natives. As the same was likely to happen farther on, it seemed useless

¹ The Cacheu.

² The Mansoa.

³ The Bissagos.

to go farther,¹ and the commanders decided to turn back.

During their stay of two days, the north star appeared to them very low and they met with an obstacle unknown elsewhere, for instead of the flux and reflux being six hours each, as at Venice and everywhere in the West, the tide rose in four hours, and took eight to subside. So great was its impetuosity when it came in that three anchors scarcely sufficed to hold each caravel. On one occasion the current forced them to set their sails, and not without peril, for it was far stronger than the sails with the wind.²

On the way back to Portugal, Cadamosto and his companions took a course towards those islands which were distant about thirty miles from the mainland, and arrived there. Two of them were large and others small, the former being inhabited by negroes. The land was low and covered with tall and beautiful trees. They could not have speech with the people, because neither party understood the other, so they pursued their course homewards and, God guiding them, arrived safely. Their discoveries are registered in some of the maps of Benincasa.

The next voyages of which we have a record are two made by Diogo Gomes, a man attached to the household of Prince Henry and afterwards superintendent of the palace at Sintra. He may perhaps be identified with the Gomes Vinagre, a youth of good stock, and servant of the Prince, mentioned by Zurara in chapter thirteen of the *Chronicle of Guinea*, for the word Vinagre appears to be a nickname and not a proper name.

¹ Evidently because trade was the main object of the expedition.

² The river was the Geba.

The account of his and other Henrician voyages in the form of notes reaches us in a roundabout way and goes far to explain the confusions and lack of dates. Gomes related his reminiscences to Martin Behaim, during the latter's stay in Portugal nearly twenty years after the last of the events. Behaim wrote down the narrative in Latin, and Valentim Fernandes, a German printer in Lisbon who issued the finest early printed Portuguese book, the *Vita Christi*, included the transcript in his collection of notices of Portuguese discoveries which are preserved in a codex in the Royal Library at Munich.¹

Not long after the disaster of Vallarte,² the Dane, related in a previous chapter, the Prince equipped at Lagos a caravel, named *Picauço*, appointing Diogo Gomes captain, together with two other caravels of which he made him captain-in-chief. The captain of one of these was João Gonçalves Ribeiro, a servant of the Prince, and of the other, Nuno Fernandes de Baya, squire to Henry. To them he gave his usual orders—to proceed as far as they could.

After passing the river of S. Domingo and another

¹ This codex, containing *De prima inventione Guineae* and *De insulis primo inventis in mari oceano occidentis*, was described by Dr Schmeller in a communication under the title *Über Valentim Fernandez Alema und seine Sammlung von Nachrichten über die Entdeckungen und Besitzungen der Portugiesen in Afrika und Asien bis zum Jahre 1508*, printed in *Abhandlungen der philosophisch-philolog. Klasse der Königl. Bayerischen Akademie*, Band 4 (Munich, 1847: British Museum press mark A/C 713/6).

Schmeller's text has mistakes due to Behaim, especially in the transcription of Portuguese proper and place names, and these were corrected by Gabriel Pereira, who translated the Latin into Portuguese and published it in the *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*, Series XVII, No. 1, 1899, p. 267 et seq.

² Vallarte's voyage took place in 1448, so that if the first expedition of Diogo Gomes was in 1456 or 1458, both of which dates have been suggested, there was an interval of eight or ten years between them.

great river called Fancasso¹ beyond the Rio Grande, they, like Cadamosto, encountered strong currents in the sea called *macareo*, so that no anchor would hold. The other captains, therefore, and their men were greatly alarmed, thinking that the whole ocean was like that, and they begged Gomes to return. At mid-tide the sea was very calm, and the natives came from the shore in their canoes and brought their merchandise, namely, cotton and silk cloth, elephants' teeth, and a quart measure of malaguetta pepper in grain and in its pod, as it grows, with which Gomes was delighted. They went no farther because of the currents, and when at full tide the same thing happened they put back.

They landed at a spot where there were many palm-trees, with their branches broken, and so tall that from a distance they looked like negro masts or spars, that is the Cape of Masts; and there they found more than 5000 animals called in the negro language *myongas*, beasts a little larger than stags, which shewed no fear at sight of them. They also observed five elephants come out of a small river covered with trees. Three of them were large, with two young ones, and they were fleeing from the *myongas*. On the sea-shore they also saw many crocodiles' holes. They returned to the ships, and next day made their way to Cape Verde, and saw the broad mouth of a river, three leagues in width, which they entered, and from its size concluded that it was the river Gambia, as it proved to be. They entered it with the wind and tide in their favour, as far as a small island in the middle of the river, and there remained that night. In the morning, however, they went farther in and saw many canoes full of men, who fled at the sight of them,

¹ The Buba.

for it seems they were the same who had slain Nuno Tristão and his men.

The next day they saw, beyond a point in the river, some people on the right bank, to whom they went and made terms with them. Their chief was called Frangazick, and was the nephew of Farisangul, a prince of the negroes mentioned by Cadamosto. There Gomes received 180 pounds weight of gold, in exchange for his merchandise, such as cloth and necklaces. They told him that the negroes on the left bank would not hold intercourse with him, because they had slain some Christians, probably Vallarte and his friends. But the lord of that country had a certain negro, named Bucker, who was acquainted with the whole land of the negroes, and finding him perfectly truthful, Gomes asked him to accompany him to Cantor, and promised to give him a mantle and shirts and every necessity.

They ascended the river, and Gomes then separated from the two caravels which had accompanied him, leaving the first in a harbour called Ollimansa and the second in another place. He then went on as far as Cantor, a large town on the banks. On account of the thick growth of trees on both sides of the stream, his vessel could proceed no farther, and he sent the negro whom he had brought with him to announce that he had come to barter. When the report spread through the country round about that the Christians were at Cantor, the natives collected there from all quarters, from Timbuktu in the north, from the Serra Geley in the south, and from Kukia, a great city, surrounded by walls of baked tiles. Gomes heard from them that there was abundance of gold in that city, and that caravans of camels and dromedaries passed by there

with merchandise from Carthage and Tunis, from Fez, from Cairo and from all the lands of the Saracens, to exchange for gold. He also heard that the gold was brought from the mines of Mount Gelu,¹ on the opposite side of the Sierra Leone range, and that the range began at Albafur and ran southwards. This information greatly pleased him. They told him that near the city was a great river named Emin, and also a great lake, but not very broad, on which were many canoes, like ships, and that the people on the opposite sides were constantly fighting with each other, those on the eastern side being white men.

On his enquiring who ruled in those parts, they answered that the chief of the western side, which was inhabited by negroes, was named Sambegeny, and that the lord of the eastern side was called Semanagu. They added that a short time before they had had a great battle, in which Semanagu was the conqueror. A certain Moor of Tlemcen named Admedi told Gomes that he had been all through that land, and had been present at the battle. When Gomes afterwards related all these things to Henry, he remarked that a merchant in Oran had written to him two months before respecting the engagement which had taken place between Semanagu and Sambegeny, and he therefore believed the account. This shews how widely Henry spread his net to obtain information, for it would not have been vouchsafed unless it had been asked or was known to be welcome.

Gomes questioned the negroes as to the road which led to the countries containing gold, and asked who were their rulers. They said that the king's name was Bormelli, and that the whole land of the

¹ Probably the same as Geley mentioned above.

negroes on the right bank of the river was under his dominion and that he lived in the city of Kukia. They said further that he was lord of all the mines, and that he had before the door of the court of his palace a mass of gold just as it was taken from the earth, so large that twenty men could scarcely move it. The king always fastened his horse to it, and kept it, not for its value, but on account of its size. The nobles of his court wore in their noses and ears ornaments of gold. They said also that the parts to the west were full of gold-mines, and that the men who went into the pits to get the gold did not live long, on account of the impure air. The gold sand was afterwards given to women to wash the gold from it.

He enquired the way from Cantor to Kukia, and was told that it ran eastward to Bormelli and Somandu, and from Somandu to Conmuberta and to Cereculle and other places, the names of which he forgot; and in these there was abundance of gold, as he could well believe, for he saw the negroes who went by those roads come laden with it. They also said that Farisangul was subject to Bormelli, who was lord of the right bank of the river Gambia.

While thus holding friendly intercourse with these negroes of Cantor, Gomes' men became worn out with the heat, and he therefore returned in search of the other two caravels. In that which had remained at Ollimansa nine men had died, the captain, Gonçalves, was very ill and all the rest of his men except three were sick. He found the other caravel fifty leagues lower down towards the ocean, and in it five men had died; so that he immediately withdrew and made for the sea, and went to the place where he had hired the negro traveller, and gave him what he had promised him.

He then learned that on the other (that is, the left or south) bank of the river there lived the great chief Batti-Mansa; and as he desired peace, he sent to him the negro who had been with him at Cantor. The chief agreed to meet him in a great wood on the banks, and brought with him an immense throng of people armed with poisoned arrows, assegais, swords and shields. Gomes went to him carrying some presents and biscuit and some Portuguese wine, for the natives had no wine except what was made from the date palm. In return he gave Gomes three negroes, one male and two female, and made merry with him, swearing by the living and only God that he would never again make war against the Christians, but that they might travel safely through his land and carry on their traffic.

Being desirous of putting this to the proof, Gomes called a certain Indian named Jacob, whom Henry had sent with him in order that, in the event of his reaching India, he might act as interpreter,¹ and ordered him to go to Alcuzet, where on a former occasion he had been through the land of Jaloff to find the Serra de Gelu and Timbaktu. Jacob stated that Alcuzet was a very fertile land, having a river of sweet water and abundance of lemons, some of which he brought with him to Gomes. And the lord of that country sent the latter elephants' teeth, and four negroes, who carried the teeth to the ship. They came peacefully, and thus Gomes felt safe with them. Afterwards Gomes went to his abode, which was surrounded by many negro habitations made of seaweed, covered with straw, and there remained three days. Here were many parrots and panthers, and Gomes was given six skins

¹ This statement is worthy of being noted.

of the latter and had an elephant killed and its flesh carried on board the caravels.

It was here that he learned that the outrage to the Christians had been due to a king called Nomi-Mansa. Gomes took great pains to make peace with him, and sent him many presents by his men in his own canoes, which were going for salt to his country, where it abounded. The king greatly feared the Christians, on account of the injury he had done them. Gomes then went into a harbour near the mouth of the river, and the king often sent to him men and women to try whether he would do them harm, but, on the contrary, he always gave them a friendly reception. When the king heard this, he came to the river-side with a large force, and sitting down on the shore, sent for Gomes to approach, which he did, paying him all ceremonious respect. There he met a native 'bishop' who put questions with respect to the God of the Christians, and Gomes answered him, and then asked him about Mahomet, in whom they believed. What Gomes said pleased the king so much that he ordered the bishop within three days to take his departure out of his kingdom, and, rising to his feet, he declared that no one, on pain of death, must dare any more to utter the name of Mahomet; for there was no other God but the one in whom his brother, Henry, said that he believed. He then asked Gomes to baptise him; and so said also all the lords of his household, and his women likewise. The king himself declared that he would have no other name but Henry, and his nobles chose such names as Jacob and Nuno, and other Christian names. Gomes remained that night on shore with the king and his chiefs, but says that he did not dare to baptise them, because he was a layman. On the next day, however, he begged

the king with his twelve principal chiefs and eight of his wives to come to dine with him on board the caravel, which they all did unarmed; and he gave them fowls and meat prepared after the Portuguese fashion, and wine, both white and red, as much as they pleased to drink. The delighted natives said to each other repeatedly that no people were better than the Christians.

Afterwards, when they were on shore, the king again desired Gomes to baptise him; but the latter answered that he had not received authority from the Supreme Pontiff. If, however, he so desired, he would convey his wishes to Henry, who would send a priest for the purpose. The king immediately wrote to ask Henry to send a priest and a noble to instruct him in the faith, and begged him also for a falcon for hunting—for he wondered greatly when Gomes told him that the Christians carried a bird on the hand which caught other birds. He wished him also to send two rams and sheep, male and female, and a gander and goose and a pig, as well as two men who would know how to construct houses and build a mud wall round his city. Gomes promised that Henry would satisfy all these requirements, and at his departure the king and his people wept, so great was the friendship which had sprung up between them.

But it happened that for two years no one went back to Guinea, because of King Afonso's expedition to Alcacer, in which Henry took part, so that he gave the matter no attention.

After leaving Gambia, Gomes started back to Portugal, and sent one caravel ahead with those who were in the best health, while the other remained with him because many of the crew were sick. He ordered the captain of the first vessel, if he had a favourable wind, to go

straight home, and if not, to wait for him at Arguim, but he himself sailed to Cape Verde. As he came near the seashore, he saw two canoes putting out to sea, and placing his vessel between them and the land, he went up to them, and in one of the canoes counted thirty-eight men. The interpreter came to Gomes and said in his ear that Bezeguichi,¹ lord of that land, a malicious man, was among them. Gomes made them come into the vessel, and gave them food and drink and presents; and, pretending that he did not know that he was the chief, said to him by way of trying him: 'Is this the land of Bezeguichi?' He said 'Yes'. Gomes replied: 'Why is he then so malignant against the Christians? It would be better for him to make peace with them, so that both might interchange merchandise, and that he might obtain horses, etc., as Burbruck and Budamel and the other lords of the negroes do. Tell him that I have taken you in this sea, and for love of him have let you go freely on shore.' They were all well content, and Gomes told them to go into their canoes, which they did, and as they all stood there, he said to the chief: 'Bezeguichi, Bezeguichi, do not think that I did not know you. It was in my power to do with you whatever I wished, and since I have acted kindly by you, do likewise by our Christians.' With this they each went their way.

A few days later, the Portuguese entered Arguim Bay and landed on the island called the *Ilha de Garças*, which was uninhabited and only one league in circumference. On it they found an innumerable multitude of birds of every kind, and pelicans' nests and some dead pelicans. They killed as many birds as they could

¹ This man probably gave his name to the place which is often mentioned in the Portuguese voyages.

carry in the boat, and then sailed for Portugal, and on reaching Lagos found Henry there, who rejoiced greatly at their arrival.

After the Prince returned from Alcacer, Gomes reminded him of what King Nomi-Mansa had said, and Henry despatched a priest to remain with the king and instruct him in the faith, and with him a young man of his household named John Delgado. This was in the year 1458.

At this point Gomes interrupts his narrative, as presented to us by Valentim Fernandes, to speak of the death of Henry in 1460 and his burial, and then describes his second voyage, which he says took place two years afterwards. Opinions differ as to whether the two years are to be counted from 1458 or from 1460. Most writers adopt the former calculation, but Professor Fortunato de Almeida¹ inclines to the latter, on the ground that Gomes would not relate events out of chronological order and that King Afonso gave instructions for the equipment of the caravel for the second expedition, which goes far to prove that Henry was then dead, for in his lifetime he had the superintendence of such matters. It is not possible, however, to found an argument on the text, seeing that, as already stated, Gomes did not write it; and as we know that the Cape Verde islands were discovered in or before 1460, the second voyage of Gomes cannot have been later, if he took part in the discovery.

On this expedition he carried with him ten horses and went to the land of the Barbacini, between Serreos and that of King Nomi-Mansa. Afonso V gave him authority over 'the shores of that sea,' so that all the caravels he found off the land of Guinea were to be

¹ *Historia de Portugal*, vol. ii, p. 101.

under his command; the king knew that there were some which carried arms to the Moors, and he ordered Gomes to seize them and bring them to Portugal. In twelve days Gomes arrived at Barbacini, where he met two caravels, one of Gonçalo Ferreira, a native of Oporto and a servant of Henry, who was conveying horses thither. The other caravel was commanded by Antonio da Noli, who was engaged in the same trade. This was in the port of Zaya. In the same place he found also Borgebil, late King of Jaloff, who had fled from fear of the King of Burbruck, who had taken his country from him. The merchants with their caravels had greatly damaged the traffic in those parts, for whereas the Moors used to give twelve negroes for one horse, they gave them now no more than six. Then Gomes summoned those captains, and on behalf of the King gave them seven negroes for one horse, but he himself exchanged every horse for fourteen or fifteen negroes! While they were there, a caravel arrived from Gambia, which brought information that a certain man named de Prado was coming with a richly laden vessel. Thereupon Gomes fitted out the caravel of Gonçalo Ferreira, and ordered him in the King's name, on pain of death and confiscation of all his goods, to go to Cape Verde and to look out for that vessel, which he did, and took it, finding great booty in it. Gomes forthwith despatched the captain, together with Gonçalo Ferreira, to the King, and wrote to him an account of these events.

After this, Gomes and Antonio da Noli left Zaya, and sailed two days and one night towards Portugal, when they descried some islands¹ in the sea. As the former's caravel was a quicker sailer than the other, he came first

¹ The Cape Verde islands.

to one of those islands and saw white sand; and as it seemed to him a good harbour, he cast anchor there, followed by Noli. Gomes said that he wished to be the first to land and so he was. They found no sign of man, and called the island Santiago, the name it still bears. There was abundance of fish to be caught there, and on shore they saw many strange birds and streamlets of fresh water. The birds were so tame that they could be killed with sticks, and there were many geese there, and an abundance of figs, but they did not grow on the trees in the same manner as in Portugal; for the latter grow near the leaf, but these all over the trunk from the foot of the tree to the top. These trees were very numerous and there was a great quantity of pasture. Gomes had a quadrant with him and wrote the altitude of the Arctic Pole on the table of the quadrant, and found it more accurate than the chart. 'It is true', he says, 'that the course of sailing appears on the chart, but when you get wrong, you do not recover your true position.'

Afterwards they sighted Palma, one of the Canary islands, and then went to Madeira. Though Gomes was anxious to get home, he was driven by a contrary wind to the Azores; but Noli remained at Madeira, and having better weather he reached Portugal first and begged of the King the captaincy of the island of Santiago, which Gomes considered he had discovered. The King gave it to him, and he kept it till his death. Such is the fragmentary account of the two voyages of Diogo Gomes which has come down to us. The native chiefs have been exalted into kings and many of the places named are difficult to identify; for this and other reasons the text needs to be annotated by a West African expert.

Cadamosto and Gomes made no actual coastal advance beyond Henry's previous explorers, but the first named and mapped the littoral more fully and, followed by the second, sailed up the rivers, and his notes on anthropology and botany, and the information which the two give of the trade routes, are of great interest.

We see that Cadamosto and Gomes both claim to have discovered the Cape Verde islands; moreover the former asserts that the news of what he had found led others there, while the latter says in effect that Noli robbed him of the fruits of his discovery. The rival claims are still a matter of debate between historians, and their conflicting views are set out by Signor Caddeo in his recent edition of Cadamosto.¹ Unfortunately the evidence of documents does not enable us to decide the controversy. From them we know that shortly before his death, on 18 September 1460, Henry gave the temporalities of five of the islands to the King and the spiritual dominion to the Order of Christ.² On 3 December following, the King bestowed the five islands, and on 19 September 1462 all the twelve, on his brother Fernando,³ and in the latter document five are asserted to have been found by Noli in Henry's lifetime and the other seven by Fernando. In fact they were discovered by his squire Diogo Afonso in 1461-62. It was natural that the Infant should have endeavoured to make discoveries, because previously, on 17 November 1457, the King had made him a gift of all he could find.⁴ Lastly, a letter of King Manoel of 8 April 1497 declares that Noli was the discoverer and

¹ *Vide* also Major, *op. cit.*; Senna Barcellos, *Subsidios para a historia de Cabo Verde e Guiné* (Lisbon, 1899), vol. 1, cap. 1; and Sir C. R. Beazley, *Chronicle of Guinea*, vol. ii, p. xciv *et seq.*

² *Alguns Documentos*, p. 27.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 27 and 31.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 22.

coloniser of Santiago, for which reason he received the captaincy of part of it, and this afterwards went to his daughter.¹

Passing from documents to the historians of the sixteenth century, we find that Barros, Antonio Galvão, Damião de Goes and the Spanish chronicler Afonso de Palencia² attribute the discovery of the islands to Noli, though the first two differ in the dates. Barros mentions 1461, Galvão 1462, which are inadmissible. Moreover Noli's name appears on Italian maps as their discoverer. The weight of evidence is therefore against Cada-mosto's claim, apart from the inaccuracies in his narrative, but it also to some extent invalidates that of Gomes, which no one seems to have remarked. If he was co-discoverer with Noli, it is strange that the historians above-mentioned, his own fellow-countrymen, should not have spoken of him and that he should not have obtained a reward for his work.

Antonio da Noli settled with his brother Bartholomew and nephew Raphael at Ribeira Grande and founded there the first township, which later on became the capital of the district. In 1466 Afonso V granted the inhabitants of the island the right to trade with Guinea in slaves and other goods, which led to an increase of population and wealth, and in 1469 another branch of commerce attracted many vessels to the port of Ribeira Grande; two Spaniards from the Canaries discovered in Santiago a lichen used for dyeing and sought and obtained permission from the King to export it. On the death of the Infant Fernando in 1470, his wife Beatrice received the revenues in trust for her children and in 1495 the islands reverted to the crown. It was not until

¹ *Ibid.* p. 90.

² He also credits Noli with more than one voyage to West Africa.

SECOND VOYAGE OF CADAMOSTO

about 1500 that the others were colonised, but already in 1513 and the two following years the island of Santiago exported a considerable amount of slaves, hides, skins, rice, ivory, Indian corn, wax and cotton.¹

¹ The figures and values are given by Senna Barcellos, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 72-75.

CHAPTER VIII

LIFE AT CEUTA—THE CONQUEST OF ALCACER—HENRY'S DEATH AND CHARACTER

THE history of the Portuguese in North-West Africa from 1415 to 1464 is related by Zurara in his *Chronicles of Pedro de Menezes and his son Duarte de Menezes*,¹ which are sequels to the *Chronicle of Ceuta*. For the first, the author used the official reports sent home, Pedro's letters and narratives written on the spot, and from them he was able to tell in detail the routes taken by the Portuguese in their incursions, the names of those who distinguished themselves on both sides, and even the nature of the wounds received by the combatants; for the second, Zurara crossed to Africa and there spent a year in seeking information from natives as well as from his own countrymen. If full dates are lacking in his works as in those of Lopes, he explains the reason: it had not been the custom in Portugal to put the year on letters, but only the day and month.

Pedro de Menezes succeeded in holding Ceuta from 1415 to his death in 1437, that is for twenty-two years, against all the efforts of the Moors to dislodge him, and his personal prowess and that of his men form a chronicle of knightly deeds worth more than any of the fabulous romances of chivalry then in fashion. The city was twice

¹ Printed in the series *Inéditos de historia portuguesa*, vols. i and ii (Lisbon, 1792, 1793). Snr. Afonso de Dornellas has collected much information about those distinguished men in his *Historia e Genealogia*, vol. iv (Lisbon, 1916).

besieged by sea and land, and for sixteen years the governor never left off his coat of mail, so that it split in several places, as if it were of cloth. He was often obliged to fight twice in one day. The siege of 1418 was raised by Prince Henry, who came with a large fleet, stayed three months and then desired to attack Gibraltar, but refrained on the ground that its conquest belonged to Castile, and because his father, knowing his crusading instincts and perhaps aware of his ambition, sent him orders to return home.

Foreigners repaired to Ceuta to see military service, to be admitted into the Order of Chivalry, or to fight duels, among them being an uncle of the Emperor Sigismund and many lesser persons. Warfare was carried on by sea as well as by land, for Pedro maintained a small fleet; and some idea of the size of the Christian vessels may be formed from the remark of the chronicler that a foist was not fully equipped when it carried no more than fifty-three rowers. On land the Moors relied chiefly on ambushes and on their horsemen, their numerous foot soldiers being of little use, while the Portuguese owed their victories in the field to their knights, who, though few, wore armour, and to their crossbowmen. In the sieges they had to endure, their artillery did great execution, and they also mounted guns (*trons*) on their ships.

It would be easy to pick out stirring incidents from the sieges of Ceuta by the Moors, and one is tempted to tell again the epic fight in the Strait between a Portuguese caravel and a large pirate galley from Provence, which after a six hours' action was carried by boarding, to the joy of the slaves who toiled at the oars. But such events are exceptional, and we prefer to shew the daily round of military life in a frontier town, from the

Chronicle of Duarte de Menezes, entitled 'How Moors came to Ceuta and how D. Duarte saved his Brother-in-law from Death'.¹

'A few days after the arrival at Ceuta of D. Fernando de Noronha, son-in-law of the Count of Viana, on the eve of St. Mary of September, the feast of her holy birth, 400 Moorish horsemen and 1000 foot came to the city. And as the Count was informed of everything his foes wanted to do against him, he had on the previous day forbidden anyone to go out of the city, because, seeing he, "I am certain that on one of these days Moorish horsemen and footmen will be here". And this he knew because he had his spies among them, and as the Moors are covetous folk, they give great informations for a small sum.

'And when the day was well on, the Count sent for a squire of his called Alvaro Gil. "Go", said he, "by those watch-towers, but take care you pass no farther, for I know for certain that the Moors have already entered in, or will enter to-night, and do not put yourself in danger and us in trouble." Alvaro Gil was a good squire and attended to what the Count had told him, and as he began to scout near Aljazira, the Moors, either because they were tired,² or because the Divine judgement so willed it, commenced to discover themselves from all the ambushes in which they lay, each making for the city separately and they intended to seize Alvaro Gil; but he well knew the desire of his foes and had a good horse, which he spurred as much as he could, so that he got away safely under the protection of the Moors of the city. Those who were in the city watch-tower began to ring the alarm bell, and on this the inhabitants commenced to put themselves in the usual stir, and the

¹ *Ibid.* cap. 5.

² Of waiting.

Count at once issued orders that no one should go out. "Sir," said John Pereira (whose nickname was Augustine), a fiery knight of great reputation, "be pleased to allow Ayres da Cunha and his brother and Ruy Mendes and me to go and see what Moors these are, and if we find they are men with whom we ought to fight, we will come and tell you. . . ."

"Very well, go," said the Count, "but not far, whatever show the Moors make, for you have long practice of them and know their ways."

"The *fidalgos* were quickly ready and as soon as they issued out and the Moors caught sight of them, they began to draw back, either to make them believe they feared them, and lead them on farther, or because they saw by their attitude that they did not seek to attack them. And on this the others of the city, one by one, began to go out, until fifteen joined the four *fidalgos*. "Now," said John Pereira, "we are so many here that we can well have a thrust at these Moors, for it would be a great shame for us to let them stay as they are, and may be they will not want to do more than they are doing for they seem to be young folk, who come rather to see, than from the wish to put themselves in peril, or toil."

"On this they all set spurs to their horses and came up to the Moors, who at first began to turn round with the purpose to flee; but when some of the chief men looked behind and saw so few, they thought it a shame to show themselves overcome by such a small number. And so they cried out to the others to come back and making a quick turn on our men, they drove them before them as far as the Port of Lameiro, below the upper watch-tower. And true it is that ours would have made a short stand there, but they could not support a number so out of proportion to their little band, and they could

do nothing but retire as cautiously as possible; but the foe once came so near to them that Ruy Mendes received a spear-thrust and fell dead on the ground; and who could hold the Moors when that *fidalgo* fell, for there was no one that did not try to reach him.

"The Count, like one who well knew what would be the result of the affair, was already in the field and D. Fernando and D. Duarte the Count's son were with him, begging him to let them follow the others. . . . D. Fernando and D. Duarte stood more and more to the aid first request and thought the Count had some shadowish of fear, and he knew this very well from their looks and smiling said: "Now my sons I will see who turns his face back," and he straightway put spurs to his horse and ordering all to follow him, and when they reached what is called the Tower of the Hanged, they met with the Moors, who were driving the Christians before them in great toil, and in the last fear. As soon as the Count saw them, he raised his voice and called on Saint James, and D. Fernando and D. Duarte were not idle in the business, nor the others who accompanied them. And though the Christians did not number more than 79 and the Moors were so many, God willed to help his faithful in such wise that they soon made the foe turn back, not without great loss, for the plain was sown with bodies bereft of souls. And the Christians went on killing and wounding their enemies until they reached the Lizirão, and there the Count wanted to draw rein, but it seemed to him that a voice, neither seen nor known, told him to go farther on and on no account to stop, as he actually did. . . .

As the outskirts of that city are all part of that great mountain range called Ximeira, D. Fernando followed the Count as well as he could, but because in such

affairs it is impossible to keep company, since each man wants to make the best use of time, when D. Fernando arrived above the Canaveal, he found himself among the Moors, with his horse so tired that it stood still, unable to move. And when the enemy saw this, they turned on him, and he had no hope left, save to buy death as a man of his quality should. But D. Duarte, who had driven the foe before him, killing some and obliging others to shelter in the woods and bushes where horses could not reach, for the land is so rough that one can only ride in a few places, when he cast his eyes towards the chief body of retreating Moors and saw the great toil and jeopardy of D. Fernando, hurried his horse as much as he could and came up with the Moors, who very soon had proof of his strength. And the labour of D. Fernando was not unavenged, both in killed and wounded, in such wise that some scattered to one side, others to the other, until the hill they were on remained empty, and D. Duarte had another horse brought for his brother-in-law and they followed up the Moors to the post of the Lion, and even there a large number of the Infidels were killed.'

'Weak indeed', remarks Zurara, 'must have been the man who did not send some soul to Hell that day.' When all was over, the Count knighted two Castilian gentlemen who had come from their land to win that honour, and these offered many thanks to God for giving them the chance to obtain it in such an event.

Prince Henry had to wait for twenty years before he was able to continue his land crusade in Morocco and make up for the defeat of Tangier, and then he owed the opportunity to events remote from Portugal. The conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 and the progress of their arms in the Balkan Peninsula

constituted a serious threat to Western civilisation, and fearing even worse things, Pope Calixtus III appealed to the rulers of Christendom and urged them to unite their arms in a crusade. Early in 1456 he sent an invitation to Afonso V, and the monarch, who was to earn the title of the Knightly King, most readily agreed. He promised to serve for a year with 12,000 men at his own cost, and notwithstanding the complaints of his people, raised the necessary funds at a sacrifice and had a new coin, the gold *cruzado*, minted for the expenses of the expedition. However, Christian disunion once more came to the help of the common foe. The other kings could not or would not embrace the project, and on the Pope's death two years later, it collapsed. Nevertheless, Afonso determined to carry his arms into Africa; at first he thought of attacking Tangier, but finally chose Alcacer-Seguer as his objective. On 30 September 1458 he embarked at Setubal, and on 3 October reached Sagres, where he was joined by Henry, full of vigour and faith in spite of his sixty-four years; and next day he landed at Lagos and waited for the rest of the fleet. When collected in the historic bay, it numbered 280 sail carrying 22,000 men,¹ and with it Afonso set out on 17 October, crossed the Strait and reached Alcacer on the 21st, after a halt in front of Tangier to get a favouring wind. The success of 1415 at Ceuta was repeated. The Portuguese landed on the shore in front of the town, drove the defenders within the walls, and though harassed by gunfire, bolts and great stones, they got their bombards, military engines and scaling ladders in position and pressed the attack with vigour. At midnight the Moors saw that further resistance would be useless and they sent Henry an offer of surrender. His

¹ Caetano de Sousa, *Historia Genealogica da Casa Real, Provas*, vol. II, p. 18.

reply was that Afonso would allow them to depart and take their wives and children and goods, but they must leave their Christian slaves behind. The evacuation took place on the 23rd, and after it the King entered the town on foot with his uncle Henry, his brother Fernando and his cousin Pedro, son of the Regent, and made his way to the mosque, which had already been converted into a church dedicated to Our Lady of Mercy, and there they all gave thanks to God for the victory.¹ Afonso bestowed the captaincy of Alcacer on Duarte de Menezes on account of his great goodness and loyalty,² and Zurara's chronicle of him, already mentioned, contains an account of his rule. He proved his worth by defending the place for fifty-three days in 1458-59 against the attacks of the King of Fez with an army estimated at 100,000 men, but gave his life a few years later to save that of his master. The Moors maltreated his corpse so far that nothing could be found of him except one tooth, which was buried in the splendid tomb erected in his honour in the Church of St. Francis at Santarem. Both tomb and tooth are now preserved in the museum of the same city.

We have already seen that, for some time before the expedition, Henry had been too much occupied with the preparations to attend to discovery, so that 'no one went to Guinea'. But on his return from Alcacer, Diogo Gomes reminded him of the request of King Nomi-Mansa, and the Infant sent out a mission to teach the Christian faith to the negroes of the Gambia. After this we hear no more of him until the autumn of 1460, when he was evidently arranging his affairs from a con-

¹ The expedition is described by Pina, *Cronica de D. Afonso V*, cap. 138, and Goes, *Cronica de Príncipe D. João*, cap. 10.

² *Alguns Documentos*, p. 25.

sciousness that the end was near. On 22 August he formally granted the islands of Terceira and Graciosa to his nephew and heir Fernando, and on 18 September the spiritualities of the Madeira islands to the Order of Christ. On the same day he provided for Masses to be said for his soul in the islands of St. Michael, St. Mary, Terceira and Graciosa, and transferred the temporalities of five of the Cape Verde islands to the King and the spiritualities to the Order of Christ.¹ On 13 October (or 28th) he made his modest will.²

After this we have only the record of his death and burial by Diogo Gomes.

'In the year 1460 the lord Infant Henry fell ill in his town at Cape St. Vincent and died of the illness on the 13th November of the same year, a Thursday; and on the night of his death, he was taken to the Church of St. Mary at Lagos and there honourably buried. And the King Afonso was then in the city of Evora and he was very saddened, both he and his people, by the death of so great a lord, because he spent all his revenues and all he got from Guinea in war and in continual fleets at sea against the Saracens for the faith of Christ. At the end of the year King Afonso sent for me, because by his command I had stayed in Lagos near the Infant's body, supplying the needs of the priests who were employed in continual vigils and Divine offices, and he commanded me to see if the Infant's body was corrupt, because he wished to translate his bones to the beautiful monastery called St. Mary of Batalha, which his father King John I built for the friars of the Order of Preachers. When I approached the corpse

¹ All these documents are in *Alguns Documentos*, pp. 26, 27.

² Printed by the Marquis de Sousa Holstein in *A Escola de Sagres*, etc. (Lisbon, 1877).

and uncovered it, I found it dry and intact, except at the tip of the nose, and it was encircled by a rough shirt of horse hair; well sings the Church: "Thou shall not permit the holy one to see corruption". The lord Infant remained a virgin till his death and he conferred many benefits in his life which would be endless to relate. Then the King ordered his brother D. Fernando Duke of Beja and Bishops and Counts to conduct the body to the monastery of Batalha, where the King awaited it. And the Infant's body was buried in a great and most beautiful chapel which his father King John had caused to be built, and there the King himself lies and his wife D. Philippa, mother of the Infant and his five brothers, the memory of all whom will be eternally praised and they repose in holy peace. Amen.'

As Gomes says, his tomb is in the Founder's Chapel,¹ and above it is his recumbent statue in armour, with a finely wrought canopy over his head. On the face of the tomb are three escutcheons, containing his own arms, the cross and motto of the Garter and the cross of the Order of Christ; the frieze bears his motto, *Talant de bien faire*,² surrounded by branches of ilex and an inscription shewing the occupant of the place, in which the date of death has been left blank. His portrait in the Paris MS. of the *Chronicle of Guinea* is also framed by branches of ilex, and below it and among them are pyramids in two ovals with his motto. Frei Luis de Sousa suggests that the tree and pyramids were chosen by the Prince for the following reasons. By the wildness and humility of the ilex and its dry, useless fruit he wished to signify the difficulty and profitless

¹ Described by Frei Luis de Sousa, *Historia de S. Domingos*, bk. vi, cap. 15.

² The fashion was introduced by Queen Philippa, and John and his sons chose each his own motto, always in French.

nature of the enterprise he had undertaken in seeking to cultivate the deserts of Africa with many perils by sea and land; and by the pyramids, the work of the old kings of Egypt, a useless labour, yet esteemed a wonder of the world, he desired to shew the greatness of his mind and that he expected no return from his discoveries.

These are inadequately recorded on the promontory of Sagres, near Cape St. Vincent, the south-western extremity of the European continent.

The town built by the Infant was at the cape, according to Zurara,¹ who says he designed it to serve as a commercial port where ships passing from East to West could shelter and get provisions and pilots, as at Cadiz. Henry also built a fortress at Sagres, according to Cadamosto, and this was fired by Drake in 1587, when he occupied the bay beneath as a base from which to attack the Spanish treasure fleet on its way home. Time and neglect completed the work of destruction, and when the plan of its site, given by Major, was made in 1840, only a few ruins remained.² Inside the gate of the fort which spans the neck of the peninsula, a marble slab bearing the escutcheon of the Infant, an armillary sphere, a modern ship in full sail and inscriptions in Latin and Portuguese, was erected in the same year by the government then in power. But the man demands a greater monument, which should be visible to the thousands of passing ships and remind seafarers that there, or near-by, one of the world's heroes and the organiser of continuous maritime discovery spent much

¹ D. Francisco Manoel de Mello places it on the neighbouring promontory of Sagres (*Epanaphoras*, ed. of 1931, p. 243).

² The exact site of Henry's town is still a matter of controversy. Dr. Jules Mees (*Henri le Navigateur et l'Académie Portugaise de Sagres*, Brussels, 1901) discussed the question most fully but reached no clear conclusion.

of his life. Portuguese vessels rounding the cape used to lower their sails in homage to St. Vincent, who had lain there and been adopted as patron of the capital, and they might well dip their flags now.

There are also three statues of the Infant, one over the southern porch of the Jeronymos church at Belem near Lisbon, which was built by King Manoel to commemorate the discovery of the sea route to India, a second recently erected on the banks of the Tagus near the church, and a third, also a modern work, in front of the Bourse in Oporto, not far from the house in which he is supposed to have been born. His native city celebrated the fifth centenary of this event in 1894, while England, to whom he half belonged by blood, has produced the two best biographies, those of Major and Sir Raymond Beazley.¹ We possess two contemporary portraits of the Navigator,² one dating from about 1453 in the MS. of the *Chronicle of Guinea* in the Paris National Library, the other contained in one of the triptychs of Nuno Gonçalves dated from 1457 to 1459, in the Museum of Ancient Art in Lisbon.³ They are very similar in the pose and even the garments, though the colour of the latter varies; in fact the only important difference lies in the expression of the face, which in the miniature is clearer but rather wooden, while in the painting the Infant has a dreamy expression, corresponding to one of his dual personality, for he was both an idealist and a practical man of affairs.

¹ In the 'Heroes of the Nations' Series.

² A term invented by Major and not adopted by the Portuguese; Henry made others navigate, but only took three voyages himself, and these merely across the Strait of Gibraltar. The Paris portrait is reproduced in colour by Major and M. de la Roncière.

³ See the authoritative and illustrated study of Dr. José de Figueiredo, Director of the Museum, *O Pintor Nuno Gonçalves*, and my article in the *Burlington Magazine* for 1910.

Henry's appearance and character is fully described by his panegyrist Zurara:

'The noble Prince was of a good height and broad frame, big and strong of limb, the hair of his head somewhat erect, his colour naturally fair,¹ but by constant toil and exposure it had become dark. His expression at first sight inspired fear in those who did not know him, and when wroth, though such times were rare, his countenance was harsh. He possessed strength of heart and keenness of mind to a very excellent degree, and he was beyond comparison ambitious of achieving great and lofty deeds. Neither lewdness nor avarice ever found a home in his breast, for as to the former he was so restrained that he passed all his life in purest chastity, and as a virgin the earth received him again at his death to herself. . . .

'His palace was a school of hospitality for the good and high born of the realm and still more for strangers, and the fame of it caused him a great increase of expense, for commonly there were to be found in his presence men from various nations, so different from our own that it was a marvel to well-nigh all our people; and none of that multitude could go away without some guerdon from the Prince.

'All his days he spent in the greatest toil, for of a surety among the nations of mankind no one existed who was a sterner master to himself. It would be hard to tell how many nights he passed in which his eyes knew no sleep; and his body was so transformed by abstinence, that it seemed as if Henry had made its nature to be different from that of others. Such was the length of his toil and so rigorous was it, that as the poets have feigned that Atlas the giant held up the heavens

¹ From his mother. His brother Pedro was a red-bearded Englishman.

upon his shoulders, for the great knowledge there was in him concerning the movements of the celestial bodies, so the people of our kingdom had a proverb that the great labours of this our prince conquered the heights of the mountains, that is to say, the things that seemed impossible to other men were made by his continual energy to appear light and easy.

'The prince was a man of great wisdom and authority, very discreet and of good memory, but in some matters a little tardy, whether it was from the influence of the phlegm in his nature, or from the choice of his will, directed to some certain end not known to men. His bearing was calm and dignified, his speech and address gentle. He was constant in adversity, humble in prosperity. Never was hatred known to him, nor ill-will toward any man, however great the wrong done him; and such was his benignity in this respect, that wiseacres reproached him as wanting in distributive justice. And this they said, because he left unpunished some of his servants who deserted him at the siege of Tangier, which was the most perilous affair in which he ever stood before or after, not only becoming reconciled to them, but even granting them honourable advancement over others who had served him well, which in the judgment of men was far from their deserts, and this is the only shortcoming of his I have to record. The Infant drank wine only for a very small part of his life and that in his youth, but afterwards he abstained entirely from it.

'He ever showed great devotion to the public affairs of this kingdom, toiling greatly for their good advancement and he much delighted in the trial of new undertakings for the profit of all, though with great expense of his own substance, and he keenly enjoyed the labour

of arms, especially against the enemies of the holy Faith, while he desired peace with all Christians. Thus he was loved by all alike, for he made himself useful to all and hindered no one. His answers were always gentle and he showed great honour to the standing of every one who came to him, without any lessening of his own estate. A base or unchaste word was never heard to issue from his mouth. He was very obedient to the commands of Holy Church and heard all its offices with great devotion; aye and caused the same to be celebrated in his chapel, with no less splendour and ceremony than they could have been in the college of any Cathedral Church. . . . Well-nigh one-half of the year he spent in fasting and the hands of the poor never went away empty from his presence. . . . His heart knew not fear, save the fear of sin.¹

This panegyric is quite sincere, and yet, though Barros followed in the same strain, it will sound excessive to many and fail to convince them; it may even prejudice them against Henry, for great virtue, unlike other rare commodities, is usually neither sought for nor admired, the cost of its acquisition being more than most men can bring themselves to pay. And yet Cada-mosto, a foreigner who wrote of his voyages in Venice after the Infant's death, does not praise faintly, though he gives him less space, as though it were needless to say more of one so famous. He describes Henry as the first to think of having this part of the ocean sea navigated towards the South and as greatly to be commended for his studies in the course of the heavens and astrology, and, in half apology to the reader for his brevity, he adds: 'I will only say that, possessing a great heart and sublime and high talents, he dedicated him-

¹ *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. iv.

self wholly to the chivalry of Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ in making war on the barbarians and he would never marry, but preserved great chastity in his youth; he achieved many excellent things in war against the Moors, both with his own person and by his efforts, which are worthy of great remembrance.' He then relates the charge given to Henry by his father on his death-bed to continue the crusade and shews how it was obeyed, and he ascribes the passage of Cape Bojador to the Infant's desire to know the lands beyond in order to do hurt to the Moors.¹ It must be said, however, that King Duarte discloses another side of Henry in the counsels he gave him previous to the expedition to Tangier²; from these it appears that the latter was unmethodical, hasty in his resolutions, too ready to make promises and so unable to carry them out, finally that he was lavish with money and raised it without being very scrupulous as to the means employed. His liberality in gifts is, as we have seen, mentioned by Zurara, and taken together with the enormous cost entailed by the ocean voyages it would explain the debts he left behind him.

Henry has been accused of egotism, and the deaths of his brothers Fernando and Pedro have been laid to his charge. In the latter case, Oliveira Martins, his principal critic, followed the lead of Ruy de Pina,³ who probably repeated accusations current in his time, but it is unjust to fix on Henry the whole responsibility for either of those tragedies. When in 1438 King

¹ Preface to his account of his voyages.

² Printed in Caetano de Sousa, *Historia Genealogica da Casa Real, Provas* vol. i, pp. 536-38.

³ Dr. Domingos Mauricio, in the articles in *Broteria* already cited, shews that Pina is far from a trustworthy historian. The charges of O. Martins are in *Os filhos de D. João I.*

Duarte called the Cortes to discuss the surrender of Ceuta, it was found that opinions were divided. The Infants Pedro and John, many nobles and representatives of the Third Estate considered that the terms made with the Moors should be carried out. The Archbishop of Lisbon and a larger party held that the King could not surrender Ceuta without leave from the Pope, because it would mean the profanation of churches, which ought not to be done to save one man. A third party voted for delay and further endeavours to induce the Moors to accept a money payment in lieu of the town; if they refused, the King should invoke the help of the Holy See and other monarchs to obtain the liberation of Fernando, and only in the last resort ought Ceuta to be handed back. A fourth party contended that Ceuta was of too much value to Christendom to be given up. Duarte, after much hesitation, decided to consult the Pope and the kings of Castile, Aragon, France and England; the first gave no direct answer, and though the others urged him to hold the place and to ransom his brother, they offered no monetary help for the purpose and in the end nothing was done. Henry agreed with the last party. The town in Portuguese hands meant a permanent threat to Islam, because it would serve as a base for renewed attacks on the secular enemy of Christianity. Its strategic importance for this purpose led him to consider it as the property of God and of more value than his brother's life.

His apparent supineness in the defence of Pedro against the intrigues of the Duke of Braganza and others, which led to the battle of Alfarrobeira, is also capable of explanation. The King took their part, and to side with Pedro would have been to share in his mistake, rebel against his lord and master, the centre of

authority, and imperil the national unity; loyalty forbade him to take such action. Moreover by so doing he would have imperilled the realisation of his life work, which could not be continued without the good-will of Afonso V and even of the Braganza family, from whom he had afterwards to borrow money to carry it on. Between sacrificing the work he considered a service to God and sacrificing his brother he could only choose the second alternative, in accordance with the ideas in which he had been brought up.¹

Henry's connection with the University,² his so-called academy at Sagres and his ultimate aims in exploration are so many disputed points in his biography. As to the first, there is a tradition that he established a chair of mathematics in Lisbon, and he certainly purchased houses for the University and gave a subsidy to the chair of theology, because he desired the increase of knowledge 'from which all good proceeds'; the professor was to have twelve silver marks every Christmas from the tithes received by the Order of Christ from the island of Madeira. The title the Infant used, 'Protector of Portuguese studies', would explain these benefactions. Some modern writers, looking at the past with the eyes of the present and ignorant of the policy of secrecy, have expressed surprise that they did not include a chair of cosmography. His gifts to the Order of Christ have been already mentioned, but in addition to them he built two cloisters and a choir in the Mother Convent at Thomar, churches at Pombal and Soure and in the Azores, and a chapel at Restello on the Tagus outside Lisbon, where Vasco da Gama kept vigil before

¹ Joaquim Bensaude, *As origens do plano das Índias* (Paris, 1930), p. 14.

² Until recent years Portugal had only one university, which was first established in Lisbon but ultimately found a more appropriate home at Coimbra.

he started for his voyage to India. The noble pile of the Jeronimos afterwards took its place.

Little is known but much has been imagined and written down about the Academy, or School of Sagres, at the Tercena Nabal, or naval arsenal, which developed into a small town called the Infant's Town, where Henry passed some of his time and from which he issued charters. Its erection began after his return from the expedition to Tangier, and when Zurara wrote the *Chronicle of Guinea* the walls were still rising and only a few houses existed, though work was going on continually. The place seems to have contained Henry's palace, certainly a very modest one in view of his habits, the Church of St. Catharine, a chapel dedicated to Our Lady, houses of study and an observatory and a very large wind-rose, remains of which can still be seen, but nothing to warrant the pompous name of an Academy. As Baron Nordenskiöld suggested, the Academy probably consisted of a school of navigation, important for the period, but small.¹ No charts or geographical works emanating from the School of Sagres have come down to us, but there are references to the work done there in the chronicles and evidences of it in the maps of Italian cartographers, Andrea Bianco, Fra Mauro and Benincasa. Zurara declares that what had previously been shewn on the west coast of Africa on the Mappa Mundi was not true but only depicted at hazard, but what was placed on the charts by Henry's order came from the surveys made by his seamen.² The best proof of the productivity of the School of Sagres, however, lies in the Henrician voyages, and the colonial development which flowed from them.³

¹ Cited in *Chronicle of Guinea*, vol. ii, p. 109.

² *Chronicle of Guinea*, cap. 78.

³ On the School of Sagres nothing better has been written than a study

There has been a controversy among scholars as to the ultimate object which Prince Henry set before him in his maritime explorations. Influenced by Zurara's silence, Vignaud contended that the Infant never thought of reaching the East Indies, but only endeavoured to open up relations with Prester John.¹ Now, as we have seen, Goes explicitly states that Henry desired to find the former, and though he wrote nearly a century after Henry's death, King Manoel made a like assertion in the letters patent whereby he conferred the title of Admiral on Vasco da Gama on 10 January 1502. The King there said that Henry began to discover Guinea with the purpose and will to find India by that coast.² As Dr. Cortezão remarks, the designation of 'India' in a grant to the finder of the way thither, made only four years after the great voyage, cannot refer to the realm of Prester John. Besides this, actual contemporary evidence of Henry's intentions has been preserved. In chapter sixteen of the *Chronicle of Guinea* Zurara reports the Prince as saying: 'he not only desired to have knowledge of that land, but also of the Indies and of the land of Prester John, if he could'; and this was as early as 1442. Account must also be taken of the Papal bulls. In that of 8 January 1454 Pope Nicholas V bore witness to Henry's desire to make the ocean navigable as far as the Indians 'who are said to worship the name of Christ' (*i.e.* the so-called St. Thomas's Christians of the Malabar coast); while Pope Calixtus III in March 1456 conceded to the Order of Christ spiritual jurisdiction over all the lands to be of the late Vicente Almeida d'Eça in the special number of the *Boletim* of the Lisbon Geographical Society commemorating the fifth centenary of the capture of Ceuta.

¹ *Histoire critique de a grande entreprise* (Paris, 1911), vol. i, cap. 4.

² *Alguns Documentos*, p. 127.

acquired by the Portuguese explorers beyond Cape Non, throughout all Guinea and beyond that Southern region 'as far as the Indians'.

In these Indians Vignaud merely saw Abyssinians. He quoted the statement of Nicholas V that in the memory of man the southern and eastern seas had never been navigated and that the lands bordering them were unknown, and asked if the Pope could affirm that of the East Indies. But neither could it be said with truth of the coast of East Africa; in both cases the statement would be inaccurate. Vignaud added that the Pope could not describe the Nestorians of India as being 'said to worship Christ', but still less could this have referred to the subjects of Prester John, whose religion was well known at Rome. The French scholar was correct when he observed that the Nestorians of India would have been unable to help the Portuguese, because they had neither realm nor monarch, but Henry could not have been expected to know that fact, and Vignaud found himself unable to explain the reference in the *Chronicle of Guinea* mentioned above. He further relied on the absence of any mention of the East Indies in the Treaty of Alcaçovas, but forgot that this pact dealt only with disputed territories. It is very likely that Henry only sought Prester John at first, but in the course of his life his plans developed. He must have known of the rich Eastern trade, which was an Italian monopoly, and it is natural that he should have wished to secure a share of it for his country. No argument can safely be drawn from the silence of the chroniclers, for *res non verba* was the motto of Portuguese policy.

Though Henry was first and always remained a crusader, for his life began and ended by a crusading

expedition, Ceuta and Alcacer, he was also a pioneer of trade for its own sake and as a means to the conversion of the African natives; and Sir Raymond Beazley is no doubt right in considering that the erection of a fort and factory at Arguim marks a change in his policy. Raids were prohibited and peaceful traffic took their place. As a result the Alarves and Azenegues brought gold dust and black slaves from Jalloff and Mandinga together with hides and gum-arabic to exchange for red and blue cloth, coarse kerchiefs, shawls and other like articles of small value made in the Alemtejo.¹

Duarte Pacheco describes this commerce and points out the great benefits Henry conferred on Portugal by his discoveries, for the lands between the Senegal and Sierra Leone used to produce yearly more than 3500 slaves and much ivory and gold and many fine cotton cloths. Moreover his voyages led to the discovery of the farther Guinea and India.²

Sir Raymond Beazley holds that Diogo Gomes fell back on trade only when his Indiaward course was checked by the currents beyond the Rio Grande, and Gomes himself tells us of Henry's correspondence with a merchant of Oran and of the reports the Infant received about the relations of the Negro states of the interior. They are further evidence of his search for knowledge and are a part of the European movement of expansion whose permanent results begin with the activities of the Navigator.³

His colonising work has been dealt with already, but we may add that his foundation of churches in Corvo and Flores shews that it reached to the farthest of the

¹ *Esmeraldo*, cap. 24.

² *Ibid.* cap. 33.

³ Sir R. Beazley, 'Prince Henry of Portugal and his Political, Commercial and Colonizing Work' in *American Historical Review*, January 1912.

Azores; while the use he made of Flemings is of interest, for it proves that he was ahead of public opinion in welcoming outside aid in a national undertaking. Moreover foreign vessels had full liberty to trade to the Azores and Madeira islands. On the other hand, navigation to and trade with Guinea was strictly reserved for those Portuguese who had Henry's licence, and he himself owned various monopolies at home by royal grant, including those of the tunny and coral fisheries off the coast of the Algarve, dyeing and the manufacture and sale of soap.¹

It will have been observed that our knowledge of the Henrician voyages is inadequate, and this is largely due to the adoption of a policy of secrecy, which included the suppression of facts that might serve competitors. At the same time measures were taken to find out foreign plans and the title-deeds relating to the claims of rivals. It was King John II who fully developed the policy, but even in Henry's lifetime Afonso V had a Castilian in his service who acted as 'reader of the Chronicles and books of Castile'. Moreover on the Prince's death, as Dr. Cortezão states, his maps, nautical instruments and papers were removed to Lisbon, and they are not mentioned in the minute inventory of his effects.

The strange silence preserved by Portuguese chroniclers of the fifteenth century about the discoveries is thus explicable. When Barros came to write of them, he could find no complete copy of Zurara's *Chronicle of Guinea*, and he declares that more discoveries were made in the reign of Afonso V than those he relates.² Yet it is most unlikely that the King would have for-

¹ Dr. Fortunato de Almeida, *História de Portugal*, vol. iii, pp. 531, 539.

² *Asia*, dec. I, bk. ii, cap. 2.

gotten to have the voyages after 1448 recorded, when he commissioned Zurara to write in great detail the achievements of the Menezes family in Africa. Damião de Goes states that in his time histories which formerly existed had vanished. He remarks that the chronicle of Afonso V by Ruy de Pina contained only one chapter about the voyages, and that of King Duarte by the same author said nothing on the subject, while there was no chronicle at all covering the latter part of the reign of John I, that is, the beginning of the period of discovery. Goes does not mention the work of Cerveira from which Zurara drew much of his information, so that it had evidently disappeared also. Pina wrote in the sixteenth century, using the work of his predecessor Zurara, who had composed a chronicle of King Duarte and written part of one of Afonso V, but he omitted to speak of the most important events of the age, the voyages and discoveries. Nothing but the official policy of secrecy can account for his silence. As royal chronicler he must have acted under orders, for otherwise he would not have dared to leave out notable achievements in the recording of which many persons then living had an interest. The disappearance of the earlier and more complete works of Cerveira and other writers, referred to by Zurara, must also be attributed to the policy of secrecy. They were almost certainly destroyed.

Even the *Chronicle of Guinea* has been tampered with and truncated, as an examination of the text makes clear,¹ and we have hardly any information about the Atlantic voyages to the West. Of this same chronicle Pina only used enough to form one chapter. Now if when the discoveries were in their infancy and their extraordinary

¹ Alvaro J. da Costa Pimpão, *A Crónica de Guiné* (Coimbra, 1926).

development could not be foreseen, Zurara had been employed to record them, and if Cerveira had related them more minutely, how came it that they were treated as of less importance when they had transformed the face of the world? There seems to be but one answer, that given here, following Dr. Jaime Cortezão.¹ It is only by chance that we have lately learnt that an ambassador of Prester John visited Lisbon eight years before Henry's death, and we cannot help wondering what other important finds may be awaiting students among the Portuguese archives. Again, it was not until the seventeenth century that Caetano de Sousa printed a document by which two years after that embassy, on 7 June 1454, Afonso V granted the spiritual jurisdiction over Nubia and Ethiopia to the Order of Christ, and we are still ignorant of the motives that led to the concession.

The policy of secrecy not only caused the suppression of historical works, but nautical guides, maps, instructions to navigators and their reports suffered the same fate, so that very few of the early ones have come down to us. The Portuguese government endeavoured to prevent the export of maps, but its efforts were not always successful in counteracting the zeal of Italian agents. After the return of Cabral from India, one of these men wrote: 'It is impossible to get a chart of this voyage, because the King has decreed the death penalty for anyone sending one abroad'.² Nevertheless, Cantino obtained the map which bears his name in Lisbon, the Spanish cartographer Juan de la Cosa returned with two from his mission to the same city in 1503, and the

¹ His important article on the policy of secrecy will be found in the review *Lusitania* for January 1924.

² *História da Colonização do Brasil*, vol. ii, p. 227.

vigilance increased after the voyage of Magellan. It is said that navigating charts were sometimes only lent by the India House, and at the end of a voyage they had to be returned there.¹ Those which accompanied *Esmeraldo* are missing and were probably removed of set purpose.

The policy of secrecy was a national one and not imposed from above. In the Cortes of 1481 the representatives of the Third Estate petitioned John II not to allow foreigners to reside in his dominions, adding that as regards Florentines and Genoese they had brought no profit, but on the contrary had found out secrets about Mina, the centre of Portuguese trade on the Guinea coast, and the islands. They spoke more truly than they could have known, for it is probable that during his residence in Portugal Columbus obtained the information which enabled him to find his new islands in the West.

The farthest point down the African coast attained by mariners in Henry's lifetime is usually said to have been Sierra Leone, but in a document of January 1458 the Infant declares: 'Our Lord was pleased to give me certain knowledge of those parts from Cape Non, past all the land of Barbary and Nubia and also 300 leagues of the land of Guinea'. In view of this statement and of the delineation of the Gulf of Guinea on the Genoese planisphere of 1457 and on the map of Fra Mauro of 1459, Dr. J. Cortezão concludes that Cape Palmas was reached. He also affirms that materials exist to shew that in 1452 Diogo de Teive was in American waters and promises to set them out in a book he has in preparation. He is probably correct in supposing that the

¹ Vide A. Magnaghi, *Il Planisfero del 1523* (Florence, 1929), p. 16. Harisse takes an opposite view, holding that the colonial policy of Portugal was generally liberal and that the government did not as a rule make a secret of its maps (*Discovery of North America*, Paris, 1892, p. 273).

commercial information contained in the inscriptions on Fra Mauro's map was derived by the Portuguese from native sources.¹

¹ *Vide* the new illustrated *Historia de Portugal*, edited by Professor Damião Peres, vol. iii, p. 382.

CHAPTER IX

THE TWENTY YEARS AFTER PRINCE HENRY'S DEATH

EVER since the capture of Alcacer, the knightly spirit of Afonso V had dreamed of new conquests in Africa, although his advisers were in general opposed to such projects. In 1460 he had made preparations to cross over to Ceuta with 2500 horse and a force of foot, but a serious illness prevented it. In 1462 he had definitely made up his mind to attack Tangier, and some of the emissaries he sent to spy out the town succeeded in ascending the walls by a rope ladder. In view, no doubt, of their reports it was decided that the King should make an assault from the sea while others operated on the land side, and the expedition left Lisbon on 7 November 1463. It encountered a furious storm at sea, but Afonso, rejecting advice to seek shelter at Silves, ordered the fleet to go ahead. Two vessels sank, and instead of proceeding direct to Tangier, as had been arranged, the rest were compelled to run into Ceuta. From there the King sailed to Alcacer and despatched Luis Mendes de Vasconcellos with twelve galleys containing picked troops to Tangier, while he himself made the journey by land with his brother Fernando. Vasconcellos and his troops were unable to disembark on account of the rough sea, but the Moors fired on them from the walls, and as it had been settled that this should be the signal for the Christian attack,

the King advanced with his troops and was repulsed. Later on, without his knowledge, Fernando made a second attempt, which was equally unsuccessful, and on 19 January 1464 a third. On this occasion the Portuguese actually reached the top of the walls, but were unable to descend into the town, and in that exposed position they proved an easy mark for the Moorish crossbowmen: 200 were slain and 100 taken prisoners. Afonso received the news of the repulse when he was about to cross to Gibraltar, which had been captured by the Spaniards in 1463, to have an interview with Henry IV of Castile. He returned to Africa later, but only to make his way home. Four years afterwards Fernando took and destroyed Anafé.

In 1470 the King of Portugal decided to renew the Crusade and attack Arzila, situated on the Atlantic coast, outside the Strait, but he afterwards changed his mind and proposed to go against Tangier. His councillors, however, intervened to dissuade him; the Cortes made representations in the same sense and he was persuaded to adhere to the first plan. He therefore sent Pero de Alcaçova, a high treasury official, and Vincent Simões, a knowledgeable man in the affairs of the sea, in disguise to spy out the harbour and means of landing; but when all was ready, an untoward incident delayed the expedition. In March 1471 the Bastard of Fauconberg, acting in the interests of Henry VI of England against Edward IV, seized and plundered in the Channel twelve richly laden Portuguese ships returning from Flanders, on the ground of the assistance given to Edward by the Duke of Burgundy. This piratical act, a serious breach of the alliance between Portugal and England, enraged Afonso V, and when the ambassadors whom he sent to London to demand satis-

faction met with no success, he contemplated directing against England the fleet he had prepared for Arzila and actually named John, son of the Duke of Braganza, to command it. Though he desisted from this step, he issued a declaration of war and authorised his subjects to make reprisals on English shipping. But Henry VI died shortly afterwards, Edward IV confirmed the Treaty of Windsor, and restitution was made to the Portuguese in due course.

Afonso and his son John, then aged sixteen and only recently married, left Lisbon for Africa on 15 August 1471,¹ with a fleet of 400 sail, carrying 30,000 men, which included the principal nobles and cavaliers of the realm; and after a halt at Lagos, where Mass was said, a sermon preached and the objective published, they went on to Arzila, which was reached on the 20th. Goes describes it as being then a well-built and prosperous town and the neighbourhood as rich in fruit-trees and corn; its inhabitants were warlike and continually raided the coasts of Spain. The Portuguese landed with difficulty on account of the rough sea, and a galley and various ships and boats were swamped and more than 200 men drowned. The bad weather made it impossible for the moment to disembark the palisade, which was intended to protect the camp and the siege guns, but the King's ardent nature would not brook any delay, and though he had only two bombards on shore, he ordered the siege to begin. After three days, their discharges

¹ The authorities for the expedition to Arzila are the *Cronica de D. Afonso V*, by Ruy de Pina, and the work of Goes, but these were composed some time after the event, the first being published in 1504, the second in 1567. The magnificent tapestries at Pastrana in old Castile illustrating it are contemporary productions and enable us to correct some of the statements of the chroniclers; the *Historia de Arzila*, by Professor David Lopes (Coimbra, 1925), founded on Berber and Portuguese sources, gives the most full and trustworthy account

brought down a strip of wall, and on the 24th, St. Bartholomew's Day, the besieged displayed a white flag and negotiations began for the surrender. But some Portuguese captains refused to await the result and rushed the breach while the Moors were unprepared, and Arzila was in their hands before the King knew it. So say the chroniclers, but an inscription on one of the tapestries, that depicting the assault, states that before dawn the King addressed his men-at-arms, who then, some by the breach, others by scaling ladders, furiously entered the city. The King had the gates opened and entered, while part of the garrison retired to the mosque and castle and made for hours a desperate but fruitless resistance.

The capture of these strongholds cost the Portuguese dear. Two of their leaders, D. John Coutinho, Count of Marialva, and D. Alvaro de Castro, Count of Monsanto, perished, and Prince John's sword was twisted by the blows he gave. After the victory the King knighted his son in the mosque and, pointing out to him the dead body of Marialva, said, not without some tears: 'God make you as good a knight as he who lies there.' The Moorish prisoners numbered 5000, the dead 2000 and fifty Christian captives were released. The spoil was estimated as worth 800,000 gold *dobras*, which the King with his wonted generosity left to his men, refusing to take anything for himself. The King of Fez came to relieve the town when it was already in Christian hands and found that two of his wives and a young son and daughter were among the prisoners. The boy, who afterwards ascended the throne of Fez, was taken to Portugal, but the other three were exchanged for the bones of the Infant Ferdinand, who, as already related, had been left as hostage in 1437. A

truce for twenty years was made between the two monarchs, under which the Portuguese were to enjoy Ceuta, Alcacer and Arzila and the surrounding lands in peace. The internal dissensions of the kingdom of Fez accounted for the Christian successes, while those of Morocco facilitated the later conquests of Manuel I.

The capture of Arzila had unexpected result and one very fortunate for the Portuguese. The inhabitants of Tangier, which was now between the two fires of Arzila and Alcacer, fearing to be attacked and lose their lives and property, abandoned the place, and Afonso V thus became its master without bloodshed. He then added a new title to his crown, styling himself King of Portugal and the Algarves on this side (of the Strait) and beyond the sea, and notified the Pope and his brother sovereigns thereof. Goes remarks that Andalusia reaped the chief benefit by the change of ownership of Arzila, because the province became safe from Moorish raids now that all the keys of the Strait were in Christian hands, and he states that the people shewed their satisfaction by entertaining members of the expedition who crossed over and returned to their homes by the land route.

The capture of Arzila and Tangier forms the subject for an epic by Vasco Mousinho de Quevedo, entitled *Afonso Africano*, a title which the King won by his crusading exploits and by which he is known to this day. Though the poem went through three editions, it is now read only by professed students of literature, while the tapestries, by their admirable design and colouring, give pleasure to all who see them.¹ It is believed that the drawings for them were made by

¹ Portions are reproduced by Dr. Reynaldo dos Santos in *As tapeçarias da tomada de Arzila* (1925) and in *L'Art portugais de l'époque des grandes découvertes* (Paris, 1931).

Nuno Gonçalves, painter to Afonso V, and that they were woven in Flanders, perhaps at Tournai, and taken to Spain in the time of the Philips, between 1580 and 1628. Their removal from Portugal saved them from the fate of the other famous tapestries and the spoils of the East which adorned the Royal Palace in the great square of Lisbon by the Tagus, and perished in the great earthquake of 1755. They form one of the few historical sets of the fifteenth century which still exist, and are documents of high value for the history and iconography of the time. They contain Afonso's device, a mill-wheel with drops of water scattered round it, symbolical of his love for his wife and regret at her death, which is further shewn by the motto *Jamais*; he could never forget her. The Pastrana tapestries also depict the occupation of Tangier, the evacuation of the city by the Moors and the entry of the Portuguese army into the town.

The attempt to found a dominion in Morocco did not end with Afonso V, and it was followed up by John II and Manoel I, with the persistency and continuity which marks the foreign policy of the House of Aviz. In 1489 John endeavoured to found a town on the banks of the river Larache, which he designed to name Graciosa, thinking it would be a useful base of operations against Fez, and sent out two small expeditions for the purpose. But no sooner was a fort erected there than it was besieged by the King of Fez, who blocked the river and reduced the garrison to extremities, so that the place had to be evacuated.

In the following year Targa was taken by a force from Ceuta and destroyed; while in 1505, under Manoel I, Agadir fell into the hands of the Portuguese, who in 1506 built a castle in front of Mogador, of

which Diogo de Azambuja was made governor, and in 1508 he took possession of the neighbouring town of Safi. In 1509 Mazagão fell, and in 1513 the Duke of Braganza, with a fleet of 400 vessels carrying 15,000 men, conquered Azamor. The Portuguese thus became masters of the principal coast towns of Morocco from Alcacer-Seguer in the Mediterranean to Agadir near Cape Guer on the Atlantic, but the maintenance of these places proved a heavy burden in men and money. They had to suffer constant attacks, the tribute received and the trade done did not pay for their upkeep, and food for the garrisons had often to be purchased abroad and transported there. Moreover, their conquest aroused a strong nationalist feeling against the Christian intruders, and when Morocco became united under one sovereign and the Portuguese could no longer play off one ruler against another, their position became very difficult. Even before that event, John III had decided for economic reasons to abandon Azamor, Safi and Alcacer-Seguer, to withdraw from the outskirts of Ceuta, and to concentrate his forces in Tangier and Arzila. He accordingly applied to the Pope for permission to demolish the churches and monasteries in the places to be given up, to save them from profanation, and after the siege of Safi in 1534 he asked the opinion of the City Council of Lisbon and other bodies on his project. Nothing, however, was done for the moment, but in 1541 the Moors retook Agadir, and this event perhaps induced the King to act, for in the following year he withdrew from Safi and Azamor and in 1549 from Alcacer-Seguer and Arzila. Thus only Ceuta, Tangier and Mazagão were left in Portuguese hands. The first remained Spanish after the Revolution of 1640, being the only part of the Portuguese dominions

which did not recognise John IV. Tangier was ceded to England in 1661, as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza on her marriage to Charles II, and finally Mazagão reverted to the Moors in 1769.

After Henry's death, the progress of discovery suffered a temporary, but not unnatural check. A small country like Portugal with a population of about 1,000,000 had ample scope for its trading energies on the mainland of Africa and in the islands, and private enterprise could not be expected to go farther afield without encouragement from above and a likelihood of profit. All that the Infant Fernando, Henry's heir, could do up to his death in 1470 was to complete the discovery of the Cape Verde Archipelago, since his uncle had left him heavy debts, the price of his services to Christianity and knowledge. State aid would have enabled the work of exploration to continue, if a competent director had existed, but neither Fernando nor yet Afonso V had Henry's personality, and both of them, as we have seen, were bent on conquests in Morocco, costly enterprises which, with the King's generous grants to the nobility, left him ever impecunious. But the Henrician tradition survived, and it is not surprising that the only voyage we hear of made by the Portuguese in the next decade was one by a squire of Henry, Pedro de Sintra, which is related by Cadamosto.¹

The latter obtained an account of it from a young Portuguese who had been his secretary and who, after accompanying Sintra, returned to Cadamosto, who still resided at Lagos. According to his story, the King sent Sintra out in 1462 in command of two caravels with orders to go farther ahead down the coast of the

¹ The account is printed by Signor Caddeo, *op. cit.* p. 283 *et seq.*

negroes and find new countries, and he went first to the two large inhabited islands, discovered by Cadamosto in his second voyage, at the mouth of the Rio Grande, on one of which some of his men landed. In the huts of reeds they found some wooden figures, which led them to think that the blacks were idolaters, but as they were unable to hold any conversation with them, through ignorance of the language, they returned to the ships and proceeded on their voyage. After sailing forty miles, they reached the mouth of a large river, about three or four miles in breadth, called Besegue, from the name of the chief who lived at its mouth;¹ and 140 miles farther on they came to a cape which they called Cape Verga, and eighty miles beyond to another cape, which the sailors all agreed was the highest they had ever seen. It was covered with beautiful green trees, and had at its summit a point shaped like a diamond. In honour of Henry, and in memory of his place of residence, they gave it the name of Cape Sagres. The people worshipped wooden images in the shape of men, to which at meal-times they offered food; they were tawny rather than black, and had figures branded on their faces and bodies. They had no clothes, but simply wore pieces of the bark of trees in front of them. They possessed no arms, for they had no iron in their country. They lived on rice, honey and vegetables, such as beans and kidney-beans, larger than those of Europe. They had also beef and goats' flesh, but in no great quantity. Near the cape were two little islands, one about six miles distant, the other eight,² too small to be inhabited, but thickly covered with trees. Those who lived on this river used very large canoes, each carrying from thirty to forty

¹ Bezeguiche.

² The isles of Los, a corruption of *idolos* (idols).

men, who rowed standing, without rowlocks. They had their ears pierced, and wore in them a variety of gold rings; both the men and the women also had the cartilage of their noses pierced and a ring passed through, like buffaloes in Italy, but these they took off when they ate.

About forty miles beyond Cape Sagres they found another river, the San Vicente, about four miles broad at the mouth, and some five miles farther they came to another river, called Rio Verde, yet broader at the mouth than the San Vicente. The country and the coast were very mountainous, but everywhere there was good anchorage. Twenty-four miles on was another promontory, which they called Cape Ledo, or Joyous, on account of the beauty and verdure of the country. Farther on was a lofty mountain range extending fifty miles, covered with lofty trees, at the end of which, at about eight miles out at sea, were three little islands, the largest about ten or twelve miles in circumference. These they called the Selvagens, and the mountain they called Sierra Leone, on account of the roaring of the thunder which was constantly heard on its cloud-capped summit.¹

Beyond Sierra Leone the coast was low, and thirty miles on they found a large river, three miles broad at its mouth, which they called Rio Roxo, or Red river, because, passing through a red soil, it assumed that colour. Farther on was a cape, also of red colour, which they named Cape Roxo; and about eight miles out to sea, an uninhabited island, which for the same reason they called Ilha Roxa. In this island the north star seemed to be about the height of a man above the sea. Beyond

¹ Sintra, however, told Duarte Pacheco that he gave this name because the land was so wild (*Esmeraldo*, cap. 33).

Cape Roxo they discovered a kind of gulf, into which flowed a large river, and this they named Santa Maria das Neves (St. Mary of the Snows), because of the day when they reached it. They saw it on 2 July, the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin. On the other side of the river was a point, and opposite that, a little way out at sea, a small island. The gulf was full of sand-banks, running ten or twelve miles along the coast. The sea broke there with great violence, and there was a very powerful current, both at the ebb and flow of the tide. They called this island Ilha dos Bancos, on account of the sand-banks.

Twenty-four miles beyond this island was a great cape, called Santa Anna, because it was discovered on her day, 26 July. Sixty miles beyond they found another river, which they called Rio das Palmas, on account of the many palms which grew on its banks; but its mouth, though of considerable breadth, was full of sand-banks, which made it very dangerous. This was the nature of the coast the whole distance from Cape Santa Anna to this river. About seventy miles farther they discovered another small river, which they called Rio dos Fumos, because when they discovered it they could see nothing on land but smoke produced by the natives. Twenty-four miles beyond this river they discovered a cape jutting out into the sea, which they called Cabo do Monte, because beyond it they saw a very lofty mountain. Coasting thence for sixty miles, they saw another small cape, not very high, but similarly capped by a hill; this they called Mesurado. They were then off the land we know as Liberia, and at this point they observed a great number of fires, which the blacks had lighted on sighting the ships, the like of which they had never seen before. Sixteen miles beyond this cape there was a wood

of very green trees, reaching down to the sea, and this they called the Bosque de Santa Maria, or St. Mary's Grove.

The caravels came to anchor beyond this wood, and a few small canoes, with two or three naked men in each, approached. Some of the latter had their noses and ears pierced and parts of what seemed to be human teeth hanging on their necks. Three boarded a caravel, and the Portuguese captured one to take home by the King's order, so that by means of other blacks in Portugal information might be obtained respecting his country. When they arrived with him, a negress, the slave of a Lisbon citizen, was able to understand him, and he told the King various things, among them that live unicorns were found there. Some months later, after letting him see something of his realm, the King sent him back with a present of clothes.

Cadamosto informs us that no other had gone farther down that coast up to the period of his departure from Portugal, on 1 February 1463.

After this voyage seven years passed before the King could give attention to the continuance of his uncle's work; but when he did so, he adopted a new policy which gave excellent results. In 1469 he farmed out the royal rights in the trade of the Guinea coast to a wealthy citizen of Lisbon, Fernão Gomes, for five years, at an annual rent of 200 *milreis*, on condition that he should discover 100 leagues of coast every year, starting from Sierra Leone. All the ivory was to go to the King at 1500 *reis* the quintal, and as a great favour Gomes had permission to buy one civet-cat¹ yearly. The trade of the coast opposite to the Cape Verde islands

¹ This animal produces an aromatic substance much sought after for the manufacture of perfumes, and also used in therapeutics.

and that of Arguim was excluded from the contract, because the former had been granted to the islanders in 1466, while the latter already belonged to Prince John; but later on Gomes took a lease of it at the annual rent of 100 *milreis*.¹ Gomes chose competent men and a rapid advance was made. Soeiro da Costa reached the river of his name near Axem, where King Manoel afterwards had a fortress built to protect the trade in gold; John de Santarem and Pero de Escolar, knights of the royal household, with their pilots, Martim Fernandes and Alvaro Esteves, pushed on to Mina (our Elmina); Fernando Pó lighted on the island in the Gulf of Guinea which bears his name; while the coast was followed from Benin to the Cameroons. It was then found to turn south, which put another obstacle in the way to India. But notwithstanding this disappointment, the mariners persisted, and Lopo Gonçalves crossed the equator, while Ruy de Sequeira went on to Cape St. Catherine, two degrees south of the line. On his homeward voyage he seems to have encountered the islands of St. Thomas and Prince, the latter of which took its name from Prince John, the future John II.

Thus in a few years a large extent of Africa from Liberia to Gabon had been skirted, which included the countries subsequently known as the Ivory Coast, the Gold Coast, Dahomey, Nigeria and the Cameroons, and islands far out at sea had been discovered. But unfortunately no details of these voyages have been preserved and their dates are uncertain. Gomes added to his wealth by the contract and used it patriotically. He served the King at Ceuta and in the captures of Alcacer, Arzila and Tangier, and was rewarded with a knighthood and a grant of arms.

¹ Barros, *Asia*, dec. I, bk. ii, cap. 2.

At the same time progress was made in another direction at the instigation of Portugal, though not under her flag. The voyage of Vallarte (Wollert) and his death in Guinea has been described in a former chapter. Henry gave him the leadership of an expedition down the African coast, and ten years later we find another Dane in Portugal, one Laaland, a pursuivant, who took part in the expedition of 1458 against Alcacer. He seems to have stayed some years at the court of Afonso V. Dr. Sofus Larsen¹ thinks that he came in consequence of an official invitation from the Prince, and that the latter had long been in touch with the rulers of the Northern country, owing to his relationship; for Philippa, wife of Erik, King of Denmark from 1412 to 1439, was his cousin. However this may be, when Laaland was about to return home, Afonso, on 11 July 1461, the year after Henry's death, wrote a letter to Christian I of Denmark in which he commended his gallantry in Africa, stated that he had knighted him for it, and asked Christian to shew him favour and give him advancement.

Eleven years afterwards, Christian, at the request of Afonso, sent out an expedition to the Arctic regions. Dr. Larsen thinks that he did so in pursuit of a design of Henry to try and find a northerly route to the Indies, and that the Prince obtained the idea from a passage in a work of the Danish geographer Claudius Clavus, who cites a statement by Mandeville that he had sailed from China to Norway. Dr. Larsen supposes that Henry may have received a copy of the book of Clavus from King Erik. The facts are that, according to a letter of

¹ 'La découverte du continent de l'Amérique septentrionale en 1472-3 par les Danois et les Portugais', in the *Bulletin* of the Lisbon Academy of Sciences, vol. xv. p. 214; *The Discovery of North America Twenty Years before Columbus* (Copenhagen, 1925).

Carsten Grib to Christian III, two Danish seamen, Pining and Pothorst, were sent by Christian I to discover new islands and lands in the Arctic seas, with Jon Skolp¹ as their pilot. The first was Christian's admiral, and they appear to have started from Iceland and were probably accompanied by João Vaz Corte Real, and Alvaro Martins Homem, who in 1474 are stated to have been given captaincies in Terceira as a reward for a voyage they had made to the *terra de bacalhão*, that is Newfoundland, by the King's orders. The two latter would have acted as pilots, for there is no record of any previous Danish expedition to those parts. Dr. Larsen holds from the evidence of a map published in Paris in 1551 that the expedition not only visited Greenland, but reached the mouth of the St. Lawrence,² and refers his readers to an inscription on the map of 1537 executed by Gemma Frisius and Mercator. The supposed discovery may need confirmation, but the despatch of the expedition at the request of Afonso V is remarkable, even if the object was not to look for another way to the Indies, a matter which would interest Portugal rather than Denmark. Moreover if João Vaz Corte Real took part in it, the voyages of his sons in the same direction, to be described later, would be a natural sequel. On the map of Labrador in the atlas at the Riccardiana Library and in that of Vaz Dourado (1571) and elsewhere, we find a land and bay of João Vaz, which may well refer to Corte Real. Dr. H. P. Biggar has shewn that the Labrador of early cartographers is our Greenland,³ which was almost certainly visited by Pining and Pothorst.

¹ The voyage of Skolp is, however, usually assigned to 1476.

² The reasons given by Henri Harisse for disbelieving in their voyage are satisfactorily answered by Dr. Larsen.

³ 'The Voyages of the Cabots and of the Corte-Reals to North America and Greenland, 1497-1503', in *Revue Hispanique*, 1903, p. 485 *et seq.*

The year 1474 is an important one in the history of Portuguese expansion, because, on the expiry of the contract with Gomes, Afonso V handed over all matters concerning it to his son John. To the latter's initiative we must attribute the study of an alternative route to the East, if the correspondence with Toscanelli, shortly to be mentioned, is genuine. The laws of 31 August, 10 September and 4 November are also his work. The first of these laws declared that the African trade was a crown monopoly and conferred its revenues on the Prince; it prohibited, on pain of death and loss of goods, all private enterprises in the seas and islands of Guinea without authorisation, that is it gave to John the rights formerly enjoyed by Prince Henry under a law of 25 February 1449, but prescribed more severe penalties for their infraction. Yet while private individuals were normally forbidden to engage in the Guinea trade, they were not prevented from seeking their fortune in other directions, indeed by the second of these laws they were expressly allowed to do so, on condition that they first obtained leave and gave security, failing which their ships were to be confiscated. The object of the security was to prevent piracy at sea, and the enactment proves that in the past many vessels were secretly equipped and left port, as soon as a guarantee was demanded of them. The third law renewed and extended the privileges conceded by previous monarchs to those who built and equipped ships of more than 100 tons.¹

In the same year Afonso V, or Prince John in his name, is said to have charged one Fernão Martins, a

¹ The first two laws are printed by Dr. Bensaude in *L'Astronomie nautique au Portugal à l'époque des grandes découvertes* (Berne, 1912), p. 273, the third is in the *Livros ineditos da historia portuguesa*, vol. iii, p. 504.

canon of Lisbon and his councillor, to consult the Florentine astronomer Paolo Toscanelli as to the best route to the Indies, and in a letter of 25 June of that year, addressed to Martins, Toscanelli advised the King to seek them by the West. There has been much controversy among historians as to the authenticity of the letter, which was known only in a Spanish version given by Las Casas and an Italian printed by Ferdinand Columbus, until the Latin text appeared in 1871. The letter is mentioned by Hercules d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, in a communication to his minister at Florence dated 26 June 1494, but it seems to have been unknown to Portuguese historians and Martins himself has only lately been identified.¹ The best reasons for considering the letter apocryphal are the intrinsic ones and they have been lucidly set out by Vignaud.² Apart from some information in the postscript, Toscanelli does not tender any serious advice on the question submitted to him, but contents himself with describing the wealth of the countries in the Far East like a story-teller rather than a scholar. He relies entirely on Marco Polo when he might have drawn from later travellers, and thus leads the King of Portugal astray, for in 1474 no Grand Khan existed, China was no longer called Cathay, and the cities he mentions had new names. If, notwithstanding these facts, the letter is proved to be genuine, the fame of Toscanelli may suffer an eclipse similar to that which has befallen Behaim.

The contract made with Gomes was not renewed, and the war with Castile from 1475 to 1479 again held

¹ *Historia da colonisação do Brasil*, vol. i, p. 255, note.

² *Toscanelli* (London, 1902), p. 68, but cf. H. Wagner, *Henri Vignaud, la lettre et la carte de Toscanelli* (Paris, 1901), and Vignaud's reply to Wagner and Carlo Errera in *The Columban Tradition on the Discovery of America*, etc. (Oxford, 1920).

up the work of discovery down the African coast. On the death of Henry IV in 1474, leaving only a daughter Joanna, his sister Isabella, married to Ferdinand, son of the King of Aragon, claimed the crown and had herself proclaimed Queen of Castile, on the ground that Henry was impotent and Joanna was not his child by his wife of the same name, but the child of his favourite D. Beltran de la Cueva, hence the nickname bestowed on her—*la Beltraneja*. This latter charge was a calumny and Isabella usurper, but the grandes and people of Castile preferred an energetic and intelligent woman as their sovereign to a child of thirteen who had few adherents and was under a cloud owing to the stories about her birth.¹

Henry had declared Joanna his heir on his death-bed, appointed her uncle Afonso V defender of the realm and requested him to marry her. Moreover, as Louis XI of France wished to recover Roussillon which the Aragonese had taken, the King of Portugal proposed an alliance with him against Aragon which was concluded in September. Louis invaded Biscay and Afonso entered Spain at the head of an army. He met his niece Joanna at Placencia and went through the ceremony of marriage with her, though it could not be consummated without a dispensation owing to their relationship, and the pair took the title of King and Queen of Castile, Leon and Portugal. At the same time the Spaniards invaded Portugal, and after some months of sporadic fighting between the two parties on the frontiers, the main Spanish army under Ferdinand met that of Afonso and Prince John at Toro on 2 March

¹ On the subject treated in this and the following pages the chief authority is the learned and documented work of J. B. Sitges, *Enrique IV y la excelente Señora* (Madrid, 1912).

1476; the latter defeated the wings opposed to him, but his father, who led the centre, was overcome by numbers and suffered a rout, though the battle was indecisive from a military standpoint.¹ From that day his cause and that of his niece was politically lost, yet he still trusted in his ally Louis XI, and decided to go and treat with him personally for aid. Returning to Portugal, he had a fleet of sixteen ships and five caravels prepared and embarked in August for the South of France with a suite of 470 fidalgos and servants, and 2200 soldiers, and when he landed at Collioure and during the overland journey to Tours, where he met Louis, he was received with every honour. No two individuals could have been more different from each other than these monarchs. The Portuguese was both a man of books and action, like all the princes of the House of Aviz, but by nature generous, impulsive and straightforward, therefore unfitted to cope with the more intelligent but suspicious and false Frenchman, miserly in mind and dress. It was agreed between them that Afonso should visit Charles the Bold of Burgundy and obtain a guarantee from him, so that Louis might give his aid without fear of being attacked by the Duke; it was also agreed that they should both send ambassadors to the Pope to ask for a dispensation for Afonso's marriage with his niece. At the end of the year, in the middle of a hard winter, Afonso arrived at the Duke's camp before Nancy. The interview between the cousins, grandsons of John I, was cordial, but the Duke told the King of Portugal that he was unable to make a pact with Louis, who had in him neither virtue nor truth. No sooner had they parted than the warning was

¹ The best and an impartial account is by J. P. de Oliveira Martins in *O Príncipe perfeito* (Lisbon, 1896).

justified, for Louis sent an army to the assistance of the Duke of Lorraine, who was at war with Charles, and on 5 January 1477 the latter was defeated and killed. This disaster dashed Afonso's hopes, for now that he was freed from his principal foe, Louis had other projects and knew that the King of Portugal had no chance of conquering Spain, and in fact, at an interview at Arras in the summer, he excused himself from giving any aid.

Afonso could only take his leave and prepare to return home. He went to Rouen and then to Honfleur to embark, but at the last moment did not dare to face his people, and resolved to leave the world which had abandoned him and go and spend his days in the service of God at Jerusalem. One day in September he slipped away with a few attendants, but a hue and cry was raised and the King was found disguised in a village some way off. He then consented to return and arrived in the Tagus in November, and although John had already assumed the crown, he at once restored it to his father. During the King's absence in France, Ferdinand had reduced most of the places which held out for Joanna, and when a Portuguese army under the Bishop of Evora was defeated at Albuera (28 February 1479), it became clear that it was useless to continue the struggle. Negotiations for peace had already begun and resulted in the treaties of Alcaçovas and Toledo 1479-80, by which Afonso and Joanna renounced the titles they had taken and she was forbidden to style herself even Infanta in future, while, to confirm the peace, Prince John's son was to marry the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. Joanna, whose fate was decided by others without reference to her, chose to enter the cloister and was called henceforth the 'Excellent Lady'

and lived until 1530, while Afonso died in 1481 when about to imitate her example.

From the colonial point of view, it might be said that if Portugal had lost the war, she won the peace, for by the treaties just mentioned the conquest of North-West Africa, Guinea and the islands to the south was reserved to her, while she gave up any claim to the Canaries. Thus ended a long controversy, though John II afterwards sought to obtain the cession of the Canaries as a protection to Guinea.¹

In a previous chapter we saw that, notwithstanding the grants made by successive popes to the Portuguese monarchs of the exclusive rights to the lands and seas discovered to the south, the kings of Castile continued to lay claim to North-West Africa as well as to the Canaries, by virtue of their descent from the old Gothic sovereigns of the Peninsula; and just before his death John II was about to send an embassy to Afonso V to protest against the exercise of his monopoly. His successor Henry IV allowed the question to lie dormant and only asked that his subjects should not be molested when they went to those parts to trade, if they paid the King of Portugal a fifth of their profits. But during the war the old intrusions recommenced and naval combats between the vessels of the two powers became frequent in African as in European waters.

Alonso de Palencia, whose *Chronicle of Henry IV of Castile* gives more space to this subject,² speaks of the 'insolence' of the Portuguese, who, not content with claiming privileges which belonged to his country, slew or mutilated the Castilians whom they caught

¹ Resende, *Cronica de D. João II*, cap. 35.

² *Ibid.* vol. iv, pp. 127, 205, 213, in the translation of Paz y Melia (Madrid, 1908).

beyond the Canaries, and adds that their pride went so far that they sought to get possession of these islands which belonged to the crown and four of them to private individuals, by virtue of royal grants. According to him, King Ferdinand determined to put a stop to these proceedings and ordered a fleet of thirty sail to be prepared in Andalusia for the purpose. In the meantime the mariners of Palos equipped some caravels on their own account and sailed to Guinea, where, pretending to be Portuguese, with whom the natives were accustomed to trade, they seized a local ruler and 140 of his relatives who came aboard, and took them back to Spain. As they had acted against the orders of Ferdinand, who forbade fraudulent trade with Guinea, the King had the chieftain sent home, but the other captives were sold as slaves.

Palencia goes on to say that as the Spanish expeditions interfered with the monopoly enjoyed by Fernão Gomes and therefore with his profits, he objected to continue paying the rent due under his contract; whereupon Prince John cancelled it and decided to send him to Guinea with a fleet of twenty sail to bring back gold dust and slaves before the Andalusian fleet could start. As the latter proved difficult to get together, Ferdinand instructed Palencia and another man, Antonio Rodrigues de Lillo, to raise the necessary funds in Seville, which they finally succeeded in doing, and with the money they began to equip thirty light craft, as large ones were unsuitable for the Guinea seas. It was hard, the chronicler says, to return from these if the winds were contrary, and it sometimes took four months, while one could go out in twenty days.¹ Palencia and his colleague had ten caravels ready in the

¹ This statement is of particular interest in view of a similar one by John II quoted in the next chapter.

Guadalquiver when they heard that a Portuguese squadron of *galeras* had arrived near Gibraltar, coming from the Mediterranean. They went to attack it, and a combat took place off the coast of Morocco, in which the Portuguese were defeated. The latter had two of their largest vessels burnt and lost 100 men, 200,000 ducats and 600 Milanese cuirasses which had been brought from Pisa for the war with Castile.

This was in the spring of 1476, when war had already begun and the Andalusian fleet was still in port, while Fernão Gomes had started for West Africa. It was then resolved to try and catch him on his way home, but this proved impossible. The Andalusians do not seem to have been very eager for the venture. Only the men of Palos knew the Guinea seas, because they were used to fighting the Portuguese and taking the ships laden with slaves which they brought home. Moreover, the latter had powerful friends in the province, the Duke of Medina and the Marques of Cadiz; and the latter sent two caravels to warn Gomes of the preparation against him, and told him to use the vessels if it came to a battle, and if not, to load them with goods.

When at length the fleet sailed, it accomplished little. It sacked the island of Santiago off Cape Verde and took Antonio da Noli and the other inhabitants prisoners, and then went on to Guinea and captured the two caravels of the Marques of Cadiz. Palencia says that it then divided and that one part went on its way, while another lost its gains; but he does not explain how this happened and leaves us to wonder if it fell into the hands of the Portuguese. His last reference to naval hostilities between the two powers is an account of a combat off the Algarve in April 1477, when the men of Palos defeated a Franco-Portuguese squadron.

We know, however, that by letters patent of 4 March 1478 Ferdinand gave a licence to the mariners of Palos to trade freely with the Gold Coast, and that the intrusions continued. Even after the peace Portugal dared not rely altogether on written agreements, and on 6 April 1480, following upon the seizure of a fleet of thirty-five Spanish merchantmen off Mina,¹ a decree of Afonso V ordered the crews of foreign vessels found in the sphere granted to him by Papal bulls to be thrown into the sea.² Not only Spaniards but also Flemings joined in the adventure. Duarte Pacheco relates that in 1475 a Flemish ship went to the same coast and 'God gave it a bad end,' for it was wrecked and the niggers ate the crew of 35.³ Five years later the vessel of Eustache de la Fosse was captured in the same parts, and the captain fell into the hands of Diogo Cão, who, after making him help in selling his own goods to the natives for the benefit of his captor, took him to Portugal, where he was condemned to be hanged, but succeeded in escaping into Spain.⁴

The Cortes of 1481-82 protested against these intruders, and in the latter year John II had to send an embassy to Edward IV of England, requesting him to restrain his subjects from trading with Guinea and to prevent a fleet then in preparation for that coast from sailing. The expedition appears to have been instigated by the Duke of Medina Sidonia.⁵ In this connection it is well to remember that the doctrine of the *mare*

¹ Pina, *Cronica de D. Afonso V*, cap. 208; Goes, *Cronica do Principe D. João*, cap. 103.

² *Alguns Documentos*, p. 45.

³ *Esmeraldo*, part ii, cap. 3.

⁴ An account of his travels on the west coast of Africa and in Portugal and Spain in 1479-80 was published by R. Foulché Delbosc (Paris, 1897).

⁵ Resende, *Cronica de D. João II*, cap. 34.

clausum, maintained by the Portuguese, was subsequently adopted and enforced in its essential part by the Dutch and English in their conquests; even though the sea might be free, they argued that this did not give a foreigner the right to trade in any harbour, contrary to the municipal law of the sovereign who owned it.

Spanish rivalry had to be carefully watched, for King Ferdinand supported the conspiracy of the great nobles which broke out after the accession of John II. Its leader, the Duke of Braganza, is said to have favoured the participation of Spain in the Guinea trade, and, if John refused, to have offered his help to Ferdinand, in case the latter invaded Portugal.

The wars and liberalities of Afonso V had left the treasury in debt, and under his easy rule the Braganza family had come to regard itself as almost equal to the sovereign. The energetic character of John II, as strong in will as in body, fitted him to grapple with these problems, and the general movement towards absolutism in other countries pointed out the way. Immediately after his accession a question arose at the Cortes of 1481 as to the form in which the nobles should do homage; they considered the one suggested by the King too rigorous, and the Duke of Braganza, lord of fifty towns and the soul of the movement, invoked his privileges and sent to his palace at Villa Viçosa for his title-deeds. The royal officer who accompanied the Duke's agent in the search is reported to have found a treasonable correspondence with Castile in which the Duke and his brother the Marquis of Montemor were implicated, and he took and shewed it to the King, who waited for two years before striking at his greatest and richest subjects. At the same time the Third Estate asked John to examine the grounds on which the nobles held a num-

ber of towns under their jurisdiction, and if these proved invalid, to claim them for the crown; they also demanded protection against the injustices they suffered at the hands of the great lords and their officials, and suggested a number of financial reforms. In seeking to promote their own interests, the municipalities facilitated the King's absolutist policy and he proceeded to act on their requests. In 1483 the Duke of Braganza was arrested, tried, sentenced to death and executed at Evora (30 May) and all his goods confiscated, and the Marquis of Montemor only escaped by flight. The Queen's brother, the Duke of Vizeu, who was involved in the conspiracy, received a pardon on account of his youth, but soon afterwards entered into a plot with some of the nobles to assassinate the King, who thereupon slew him with his own hand (28 August 1484), while some accomplices suffered imprisonment or death. Thenceforth John provided himself with a personal guard, which his predecessors had not needed, for unlike most other countries, Portugal did not suffer from regicide, and her sovereigns were and deserved to be esteemed by their subjects.